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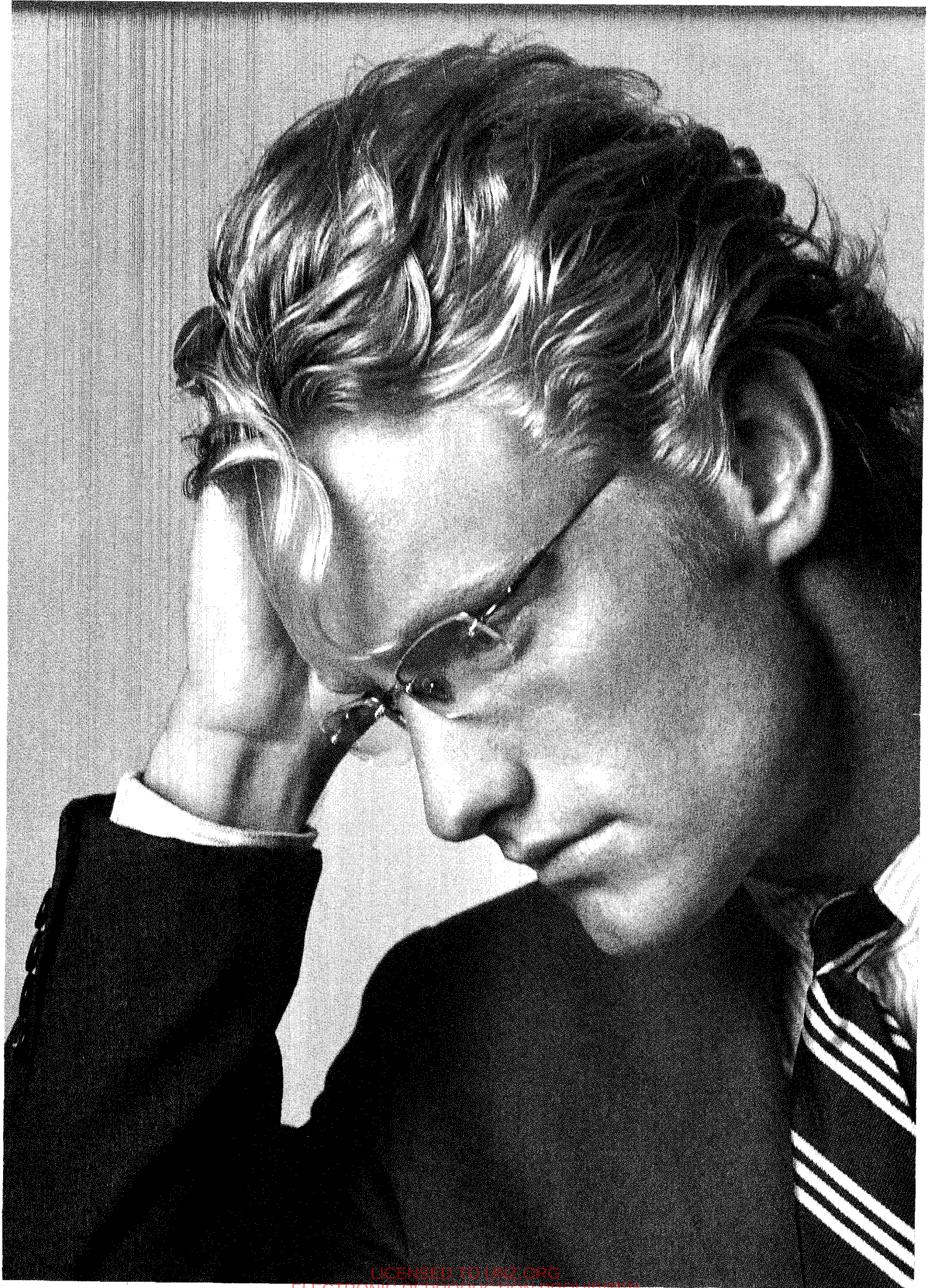
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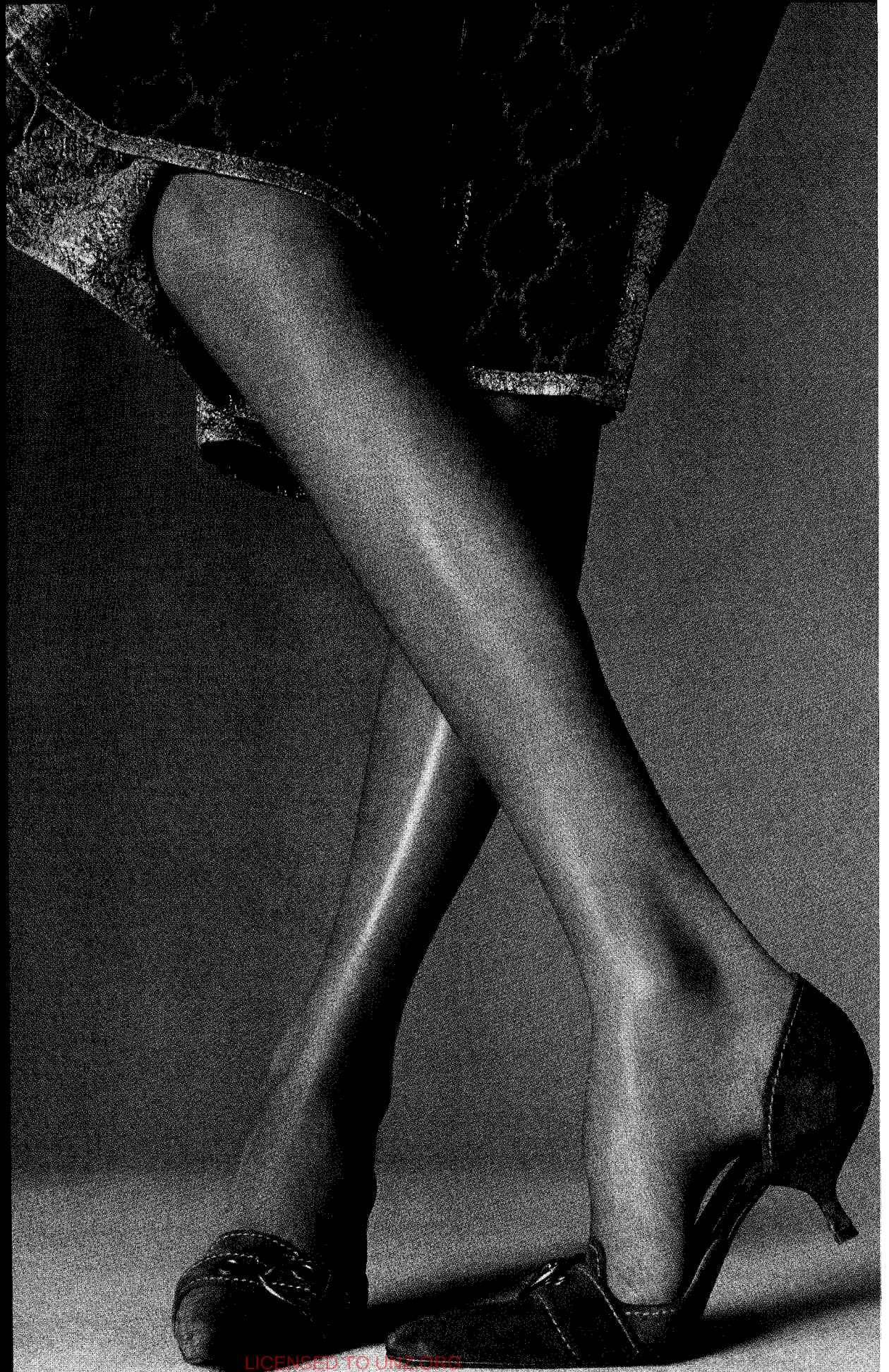
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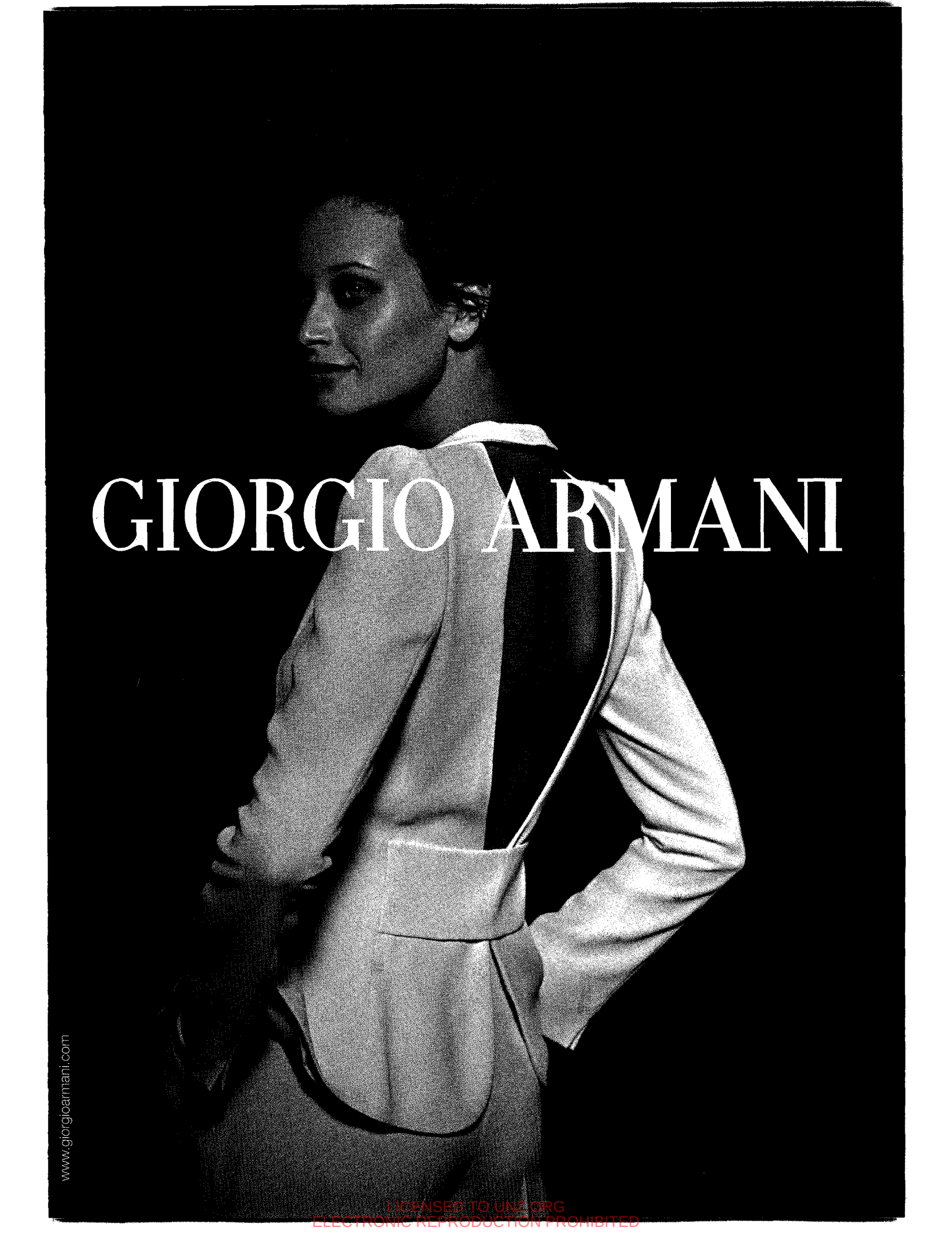
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A black and white artistic photograph of a woman. She is looking directly at the camera with a serious expression. Her right hand is raised, with fingers slightly curled, near her forehead and temple. She is wearing a garment with bold, dark and light diagonal stripes. The lighting is dramatic, with strong highlights and shadows, creating a high-contrast effect. The background is a plain, light color.

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A black and white photograph of a woman with dark hair, seen from the back and slightly to the side. She is wearing a light-colored, possibly white, blazer with a wide lapel and a single button. Her hands are on her hips. The background is dark and textured. The brand name 'GIORGIO ARMANI' is printed in large, white, serif capital letters across the middle of the image, partially overlapping the woman's back.

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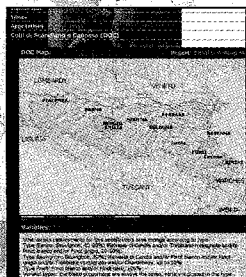
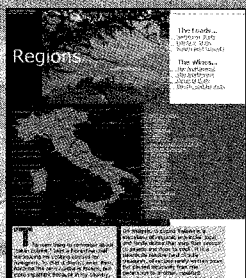
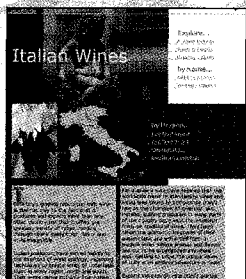
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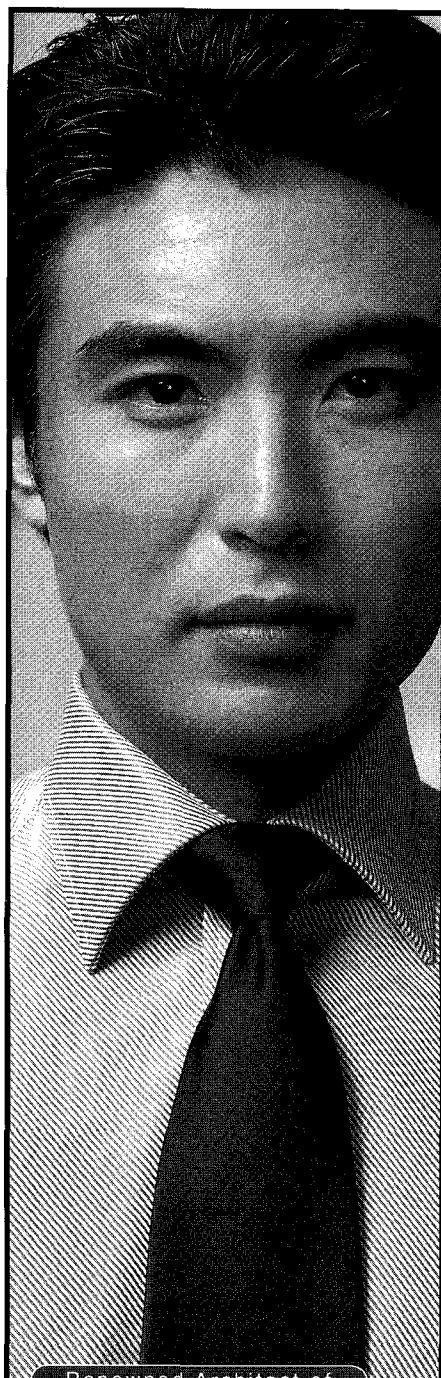
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"New from accounting, sir. Two and two is four again."

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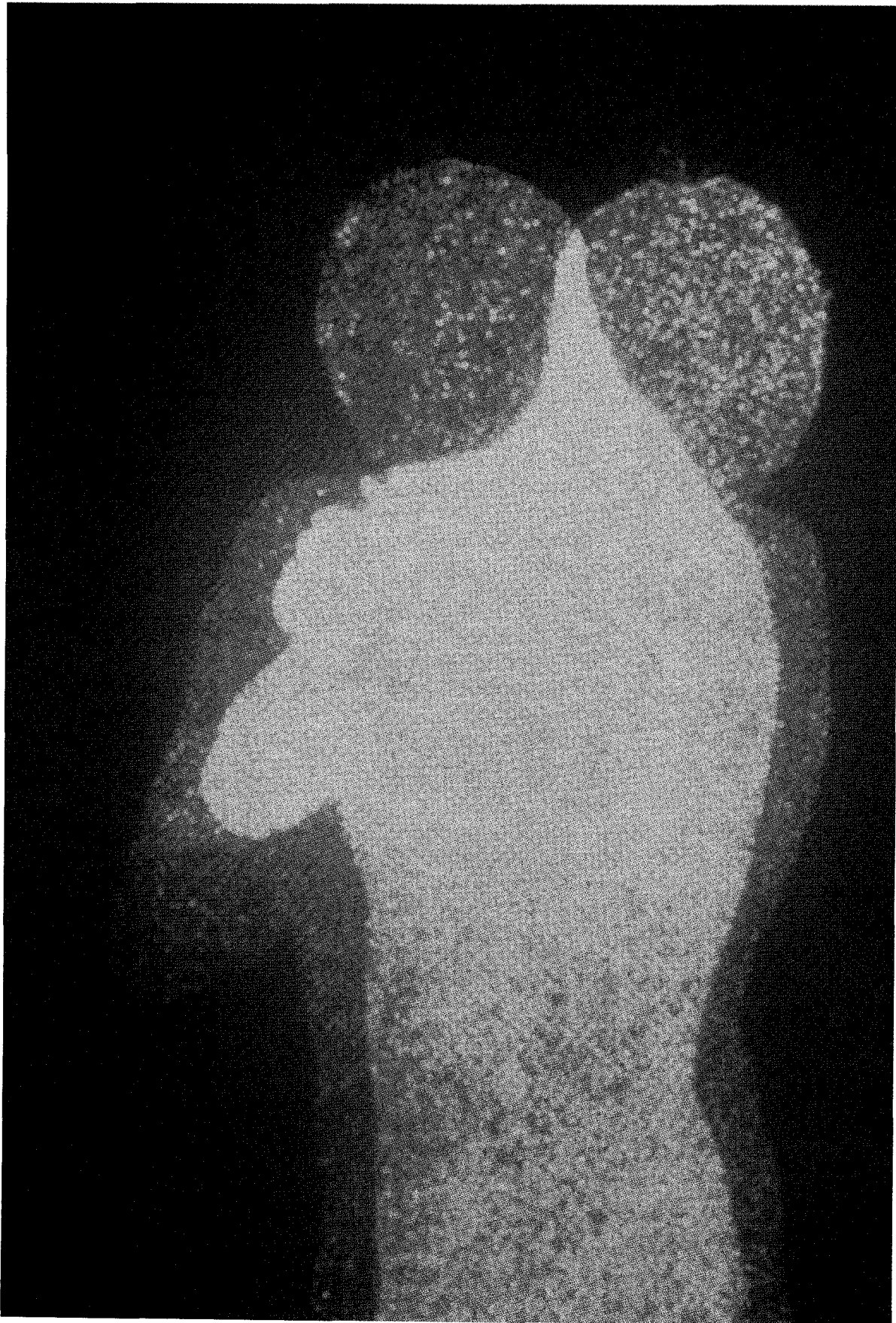
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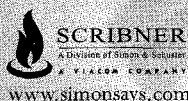
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—*Chicago Tribune*



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A SOLDIER'S STORY

I served under and was trained by Richard Rescorla in 1967, when he was the senior tactical officer of the 73rd Company, Officer Candidate, at Fort Benning. He was a great leader and a great fighter. James B. Stewart's article, which recounted Rescorla's death in the World Trade Center, allowed me to see another side of him ("The Real Heroes Are Dead," February 11th). Rescorla taught us the human elements of combat: to control our emotions (but in a way that created few nightmares); to respect our enemy; and to respect and lead our soldiers. I credit him as the first among many who made me an effective platoon leader. Rescorla also taught us modesty. In 1967, the staff of the Infantry School included many veterans of the First Cavalry. They were the ones who told us tales of Rescorla's role in the battle of Ia Drang. But Rescorla never told us a war story. He shared useful information; he didn't brag. I'm grateful for your memorial.

Nicholas J. Harding
West Hartford, Conn.

THE MILITARY'S MONEY

James Surowiecki argues that an inefficient, big-spending Pentagon can squander talent and distort markets (The Talk of the Town, February 11th). But that has become less of a concern as the military's weight in the economy lessens. In the Second World War, defense accounted for almost half the country's output, and, in the Eisenhower years, for at least half the federal budget. Now outlays for equipment and research and development account for little more than one per cent of the G.D.P. (Even during the Reagan era, when the figure was twice as high, the United States spent more on soft drinks than on nuclear warheads.) That is why, as Surowiecki notes, the civilian sector has given more technology to the military lately than it has received. We have less to gain from the Pentagon these days, but also less to fear.

Robert Kugel
Burlingame, Calif.

Surowiecki, in pointing to the jet airliner as one of the Defense Department's contributions to civilian technology, is not giving credit where credit is due. The Air Force may have helped develop the first American commercial jet, the Boeing 707, based on its aerial tanker, but the technology for the U.S. military's first jet came from Britain. The engine design was secretly given to America in 1941—the U.S. had not yet entered the war but was sending crucial support under the lend-lease program—after General Hap Arnold saw a test on a trip to England. And the Comet, a four-engine jet airliner developed by British engineers at de Havilland, made the first commercial jet run in 1952, before any American company took to the skies with similar aircraft.

Geoffrey Batrouney
New Rochelle, N.Y.

CLONE WARS

Jerome Groopman criticizes Leon Kass, the chairman of the National Bioethics Commission, for engaging in "science fiction" when he argues that even therapeutic cloning may give us a world where the human element is subordinated to amoral ends (The Talk of the Town, February 4th). But is this different in kind from Groopman's speculative projections of genetically engineered cures for the millions now afflicted with Parkinson's, Alzheimer's and spinal-cord injuries? In the good and the bad projections (both of them acknowledged by Kass), we are talking about the possible social implications of gene technology. Surely we have a responsibility to face both implications.

Abigail L. Rosenthal
Professor Emerita of Philosophy
Brooklyn College
Brooklyn, N.Y.

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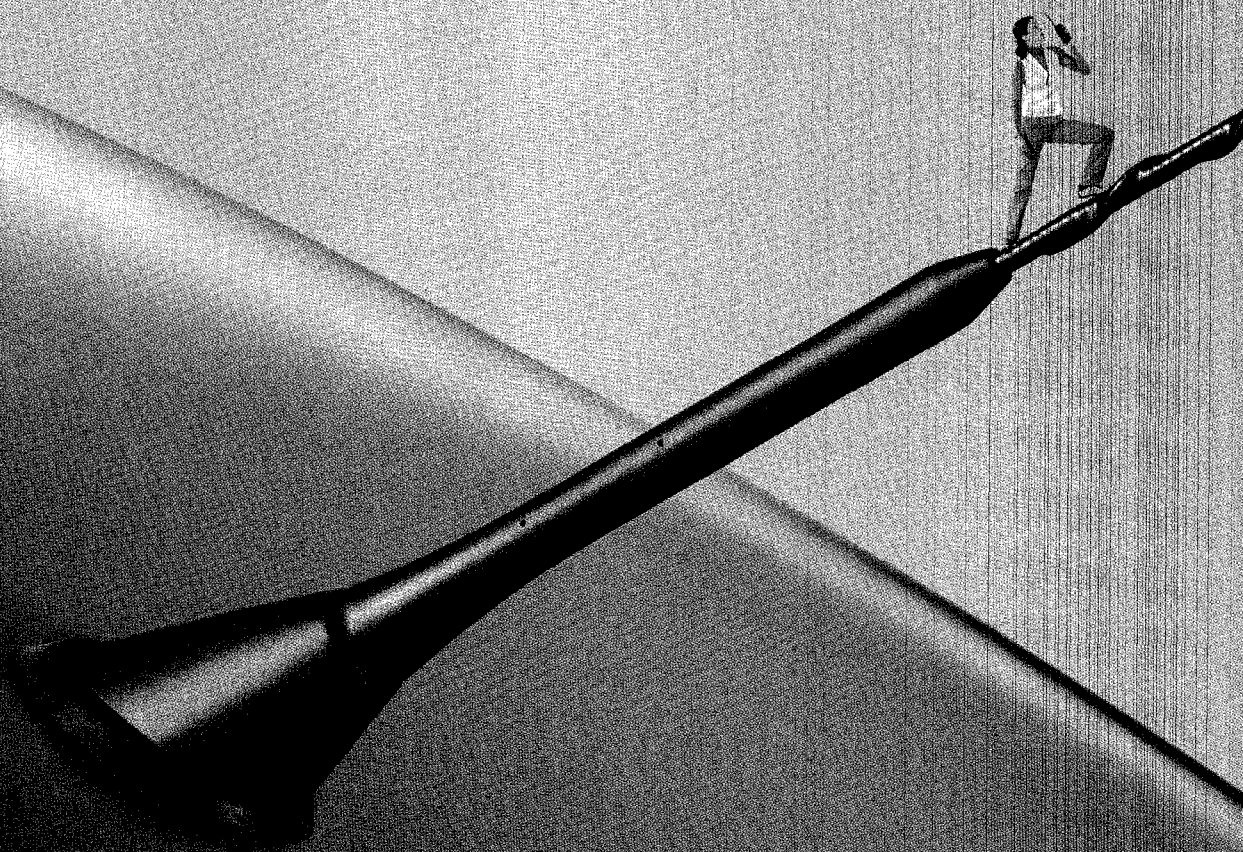
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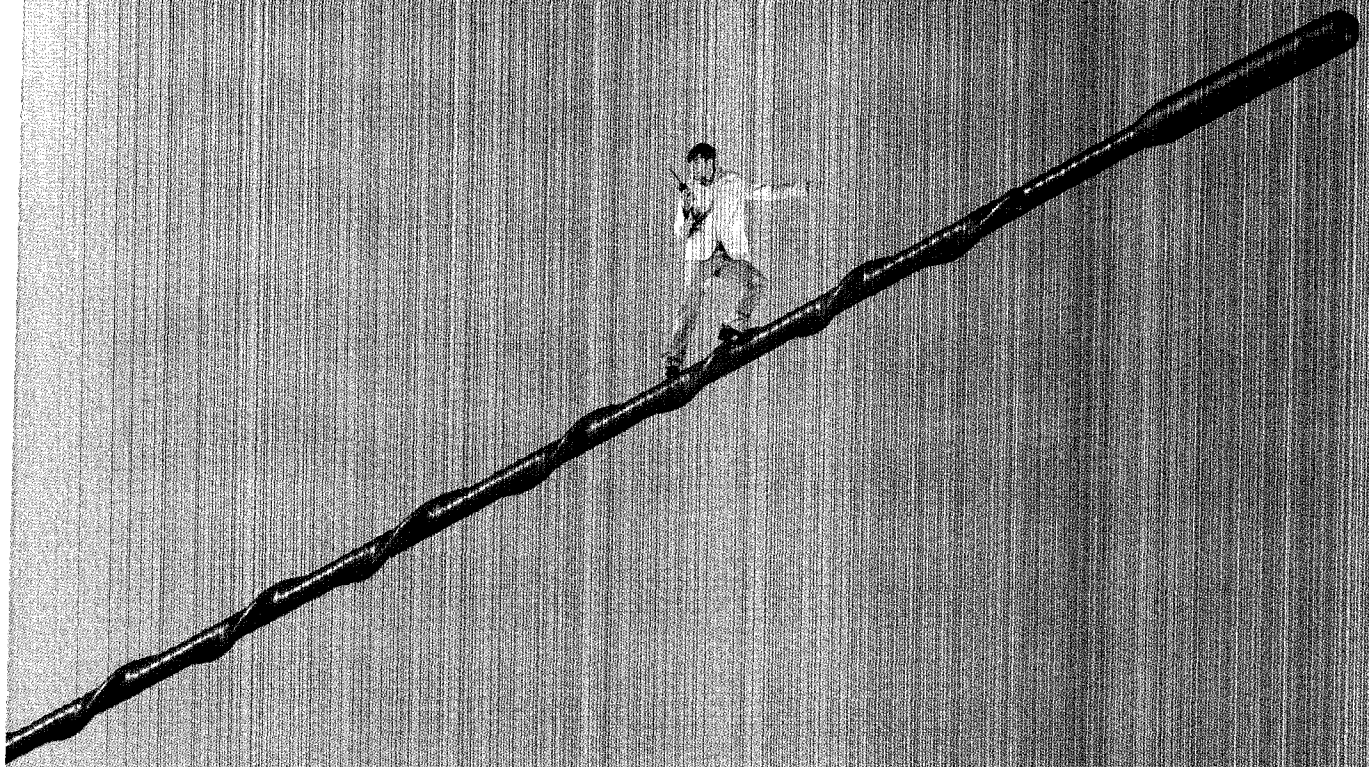
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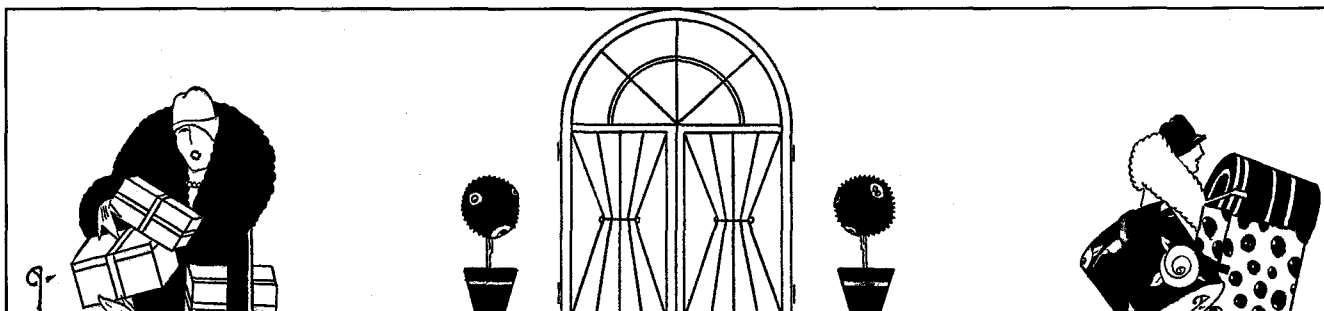


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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN



THE THEATRE OPENINGS & PREVIEWS

Please call the phone number listed with the theatre for timetables and ticket information.

THE CARPETBAGGER'S CHILDREN

Jean Stapleton, Hallie Foote, and Roberta Maxwell portray three daughters of a Union soldier, in a new play by Horton Foote. Michael Wilson is the director. In previews. (Mitzi E. Newhouse, Lincoln Center. 239-6200.)

FORTUNE'S FOOL

Turgenev's comedy, starring Alan Bates and Frank Langella. Arthur Penn is the director. In previews. (Music Box, 239 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

FRANNY'S WAY

In Richard Nelson's latest play, staged by Playwrights Horizons, the lives of two teen-age sisters are transformed by a trip to Greenwich Village in 1957. In previews. (Atlantic, 336 W. 20th St. 279-4200.)

THE GRADUATE

From London's West End, Terry Johnson's adaptation of the 1967 film, starring Kathleen Turner, Jason Biggs, and Alicia Silverstone. Mr. Johnson is the director. Previews begin March 15. (Plymouth, 236 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

HELEN

Tony Kushner directs Ellen McLaughlin's modern version of the plight of Helen of Troy. Previews begin March 19. (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 239-6200.)

OKLAHOMA!

Trevor Nunn's West End production of the 1943 Rodgers and Hammerstein musical comes to Broadway. In previews. (Gershwin, 51st St. west of Broadway. 307-4100.)

SMELL OF THE KILL

Michele Lowe's comedy involves three wives, their three unloving husbands, and a meat locker. Christopher Ashley is the director. In previews. (Helen Hayes, 240 W. 44th St. 239-6200.)

SWEET SMELL OF SUCCESS

John Lithgow is the gossip columnist J. J. Hunsecker, in a musical version of the 1957 film, with a book by John Guare, music by Marvin Hamlisch, and lyrics by Craig Carnelia. Nicholas Hytner is the director. Two previews on March 13. Opens March 14 at 6:30. (Martin Beck, 302 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

36 VIEWS

Naomi Iizuka's drama about the discovery of a priceless Japanese pillow book and its effects on the academic art community. In previews. (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 239-6200.)

TOPDOG/UNDERDOG

The Public Theatre's production of Suzan-Lori Parks's play has moved to Broadway, starring Jef-

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frey Wright and Mos Def. George C. Wolfe is the director. In previews. (Ambassador, 219 W. 49th St. 239-6200.)

OPENED RECENTLY

AN ALMOST HOLY PICTURE

In Heather McDonald's limpid, well-written monologue, a meditation on the nature of faith, Samuel Gentle (the appealing Kevin Bacon), a lapsed priest turned groundskeeper for the Church of the Holy Comforter, waits, prays, serves, plants his patch, and dutifully tries to live in a sacramental way for a God who seems, if not dead, at least comatose. The kinds of questions about darkness and light and revelation that McDonald's play raises can't be found on CNN, which is the evening's asset. But the play's incidents are narrated, not dramatized, and that is its limitation. No amount of outstanding talent can disguise the fact that we're looking at a talking head. (Reviewed in our issue of 2/18 & 25/02.) (American Airlines Theatre, 227 W. 42nd St. 719-1300. Closes March 31.)

BEA ARTHUR ON BROADWAY:

JUST BETWEEN FRIENDS

The stage and screen star performs songs and reminisces about her six-decade career, accompanied by the pianist Billy Goldenberg. (Booth, 222 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

THE COMPLETE WORKS OF

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE (ABRIDGED)

Three actors perform thirty-seven plays and a hundred and fifty-four sonnets in under two hours. (Century Center, 111 E. 15th St. 239-6200.)

THE CRUCIBLE

A revival of Arthur Miller's 1953 drama, starring Liam Neeson and Laura Linney, under the direction of Richard Eyre. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Virginia, 245 W. 52nd St. 239-6200.)

CYMBELINE

Mark Rylance and five other actors take on all (close to thirty) of the roles in Shakespeare's play, in a staging by Shakespeare's Globe Theatre. (BAM's Harvey Theatre, 651 Fulton St., Brooklyn. 718-636-4100. Closes March 17.)

THE DAZZLE

Peter Franchette and Reg Rogers portray the Collyer brothers, in a new play by Richard Greenberg.

David Warren is the director. (Gramercy, 127 E. 23rd St. 307-4100.)

DRUMMER WANTED

An encore production of Richard Maxwell's latest play. (Performing Garage, 33 Wooster St. 239-1105. Closes March 17.)

ELAINE STRITCH AT LIBERTY

In her extraordinary one-woman show (co-created with *The New Yorker's* theatre critic John Lahr), Stritch, as Noel Coward called her, once and for all confirms her status as a living legend. She sings songs and tells tales about the ups and downs of her long life in the theatre (her first break, as Ethel Mer- man's understudy in "Call Me Madam," her iconic turn in Stephen Sondheim's "Company," her struggles with booze and with love). But terrific songs, hilarious gossip, and intimate confessions aside, Stritch, with her inimitable voice and uncanny timing, ends up capturing more than a single lifetime. Instead her show is the synthesis of so much that is rich and rewarding and heartbreaking about life on the stage. George C. Wolfe is the director. (Neil Simon, 250 W. 52nd St. 307-4100.)

FOOL FOR LOVE

Tim Corcoran's precise, insightful direction is the heart of this revival of Sam Shepard's 1984 play about a misbegotten love. Mr. Corcoran is particularly good at choreographing the loaded silences and flashes of physical passion that run through one couple's evening-long explication of their history. Though there is unfortunately little chemistry between the two leads, the evening's power lies mainly in the monologues, and those are superb. (29th Street Rep, 212 W. 29th St. 206-1515. Closes March 30.)

FOUR

The twenty-six-year-old Christopher Shinn's drama, written when he was twenty-three, doesn't just show promise beyond the playwright's years. With its stark immediacy, it outshines many other new plays being produced today. The action is set on a single day—the Fourth of July in Hartford, Connecticut, in 1996—and follows four wounded but resilient characters, whose lives are intertwined in ways they don't know: a bisexual black English teacher (Isiah Whitlock, Jr.), his smart, emotionally overburdened daughter (Pascale Armand), her macho-sweet Latino admirer (Armando Riesco), and a shy gay high-school student who can no longer bear the closet (Keith Nobbs). The cast is wonderful; under Jeff Cohen's direction, they tap into the confusion and bravery of people taking tentative steps toward the kinds of human connections their circumstances have made them yearn for. (Manhattan Theatre Club, at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-1212.)

FURTHER THAN THE FURTEST THING

Zinnie Harris's play, which is set partly on the real and remote South Atlantic island of Tristan da Cunha and partly in England, takes an imagina-

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tive leap into and beyond history. It is 1961, and a volcanic eruption forces the evacuation of all the islanders, wresting them away from their world of black sand and crawfish and penguins and plunging them into factory life and damp employee housing. But the play is not a romanticization of a paradise lost—there is a tragedy in the island's past, and it still lodges in the lives of an older couple (Robert Hogan and Jenny Sterlin) and the nephew they raised (Dan Futterman). In their relationship to the island and to their current circumstances, they are psychically caught between a rock and a hard place. (Manhattan Theatre Club, at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-1212. Closes March 31.)

THE GOAT; OR, WHO IS SYLVIA?

Bill Pullman and Mercedes Ruehl star in Edward Albee's new play, in which a celebrated architect must make a confession to his wife and son that will have ruinous effects. David Esbjornson is the director. (Golden, 252 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

THE GUYS

In Anne Nelson's play, an editor (Susan Sarandon) helps a fire chief (Anthony LaPaglia) write eulogies for the funerals of eight of his men killed in the September 11th attacks. Jim Simpson is the director. (The Flea, 41 White St. 226-2407. Closes March 14.)

THE LAST FIVE YEARS

This new work by the composer Jason Robert Brown ("Parade") is not really a musical per se (it has no book to speak of); it's a song cycle of charming, often funny, but not terribly memorable tunes that trace the ups and downs in the five-year relationship of a young New York City couple. As a cocky novelist who strikes it big with his first book and a struggling actress whose career has been relegated to the regionals, the super-talented Norbert Leo Butz and Sherie René Scott do everything in their admirable power to bring the characters into sharp focus. But Brown has made the pair less than three-dimensional and set them down in a show in which they rarely interact (a device that is probably meant to highlight their inherent isolation but which instead makes it seem like they've never met). On top of it all, the audience knows from the outset that the couple is going to part ways, so there's not much here in the way of surprises. Daisy Prince is the director. (Minetta Lane Theatre, 18 Minetta Lane, east of Sixth Ave., between W. 3rd and Bleecker Sts. 307-4100.)

LOVESEATS FOR VIRGINIA WOOLF

Randy Gener's play about Virginia Woolf's friendships. (A: D/B Project Space, 116 S. Portland Ave., Brooklyn. 718-855-9394. Closes March 16.)

MAMMA MIA!

This smorgasbord of song, the brainchild of Benny Andersson and Björn Ulvaeus, the male half of the seventies supergroup ABBA, is nothing but hokum—a chucklehead pleasure. Catherine Johnson's book, which is simply a slick cartoon, connects the dots between the band's No. 1 singles. (11/5/01) (Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 563-5544.)

MARIA DEL BOSCO

(SEX & RACING CARS: A SOUND OPERA)

The avant-garde playwright Richard Foreman's fiftieth play. (St. Mark's In-the-Bouwerie, Second Ave. at 10th St. 533-4650.)

THE MASTER BUILDER

The Century Center's Ibsen series continues with the playwright's 1892 drama. (111 E. 15th St. 279-4200.)

THE MATCHMAKER

Anna Manahan and Des Keogh portray twenty different characters, in John B. Keane's play, set in rural western Ireland in the nineteen-fifties. (132 W. 22nd St. 727-2737. Closes March 31.)

METAMORPHOSES

Mary Zimmerman's contemporary adaptation of several of Ovid's myths moves to Broadway, having opened at Second Stage last fall. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Circle in the Square, 50th St. west of Broadway. 239-6200.)

MR. GOLDWYN

Alan King takes the stage to portray the film producer Samuel Goldwyn, in a new play by Marsha Lebbby and John Lollo. Gene Saks is the director. (Promenade, Broadway at 76th St. 239-6200.)

NECESSARY TARGETS

In Eve Ensler's new play, a New York psychiatrist called J.S. (Shirley Knight) goes to Bosnia in 1995 to

help treat the women at a refugee camp. She is "new to war," and has arrived with all the wrong clothes and with little preparation (she thinks people in Bosnia speak Bosnian). At first, she is undone by the demands of the situation, and then is remade by what those demands bring out in her, as she helps the women—who initially find the idea of talking to a shrink laughable—open up and begin to heal. Working with her is a tough young trauma counsellor named Melissa (Catherine Kellner), who is writing a book about people in trouble spots

ONE MO' TIME

A revival of Vernel Bagneris's 1979 musical, which is set on a summer night in 1926 in New Orleans at the Lyric Theatre, where such stars as Bessie Smith and Ma Rainey once performed. Mr. Bagneris again stars and directs. (Longacre, 200 W. 48th St. 239-6200.)

PRODIGAL

A young man leaves his small Australian home town for the big city, in a musical by Mathew Frank and Dean Bryant. (St. Peter's Church, Lexington Ave. at 54th St. 239-6200.)



Jordana Toback and company, in "Poon," at Club Luxxx, in Brooklyn (see Dance).

around the world and is a one-dimensional stand-in for all coldhearted journalists who are interested only in the story, not in the people telling it. The play proceeds predictably, but Knight makes J.S.'s transformation moving. The refugees are played by Diane Venora, Mirjana Jokovic, Sally Parrish, Maria Thayer, and Alyssa Bresnahan. Directed by Michael Wilson. (3/11/02) (Variety Arts, Third Ave. at 14th St. 239-6200.)

NOISES OFF

Jeremy Sams's revival of Michael Frayn's 1982 backstage comedy, a farce within an antic farce, is blissful fun. As the dysfunctional troupe of the travelling show "Nothing On," all the members of the excellent cast shine in roles that lesser comedians would surely find daunting. (Brooks Atkinson, 256 W. 47th St. 307-4100.)

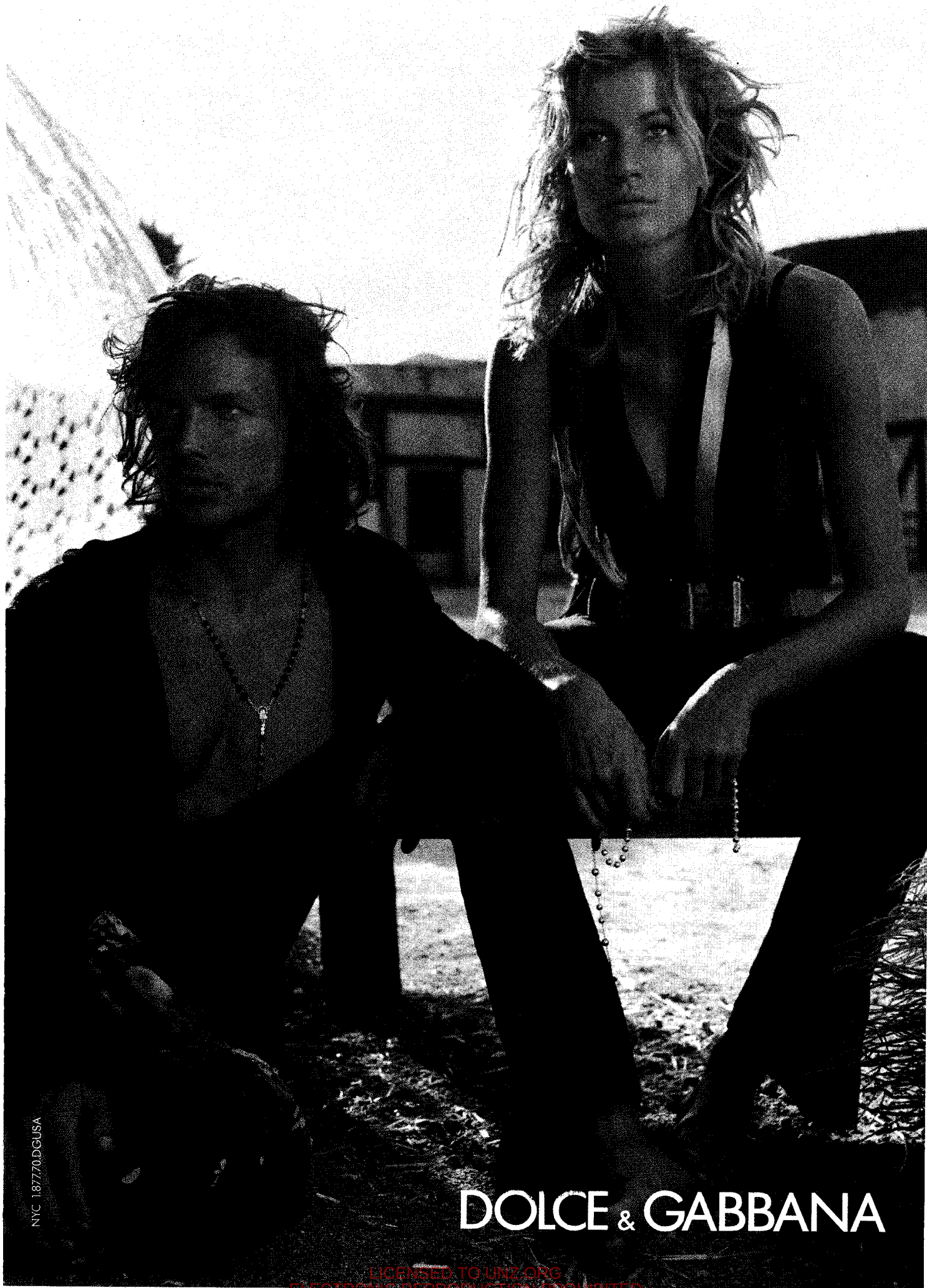
QED

Peter Parnell's play, starring Alan Alda as the physicist Richard Feynman, buzzes with life. Set in 1986—the year of the Challenger explosion, whose causes Feynman helped to investigate—"QED" takes us through an afternoon and evening in Feynman's office at Caltech, where he talks about such subjects as photons, drumming, the Manhattan Project, cancer, and "South Pacific." Alda's performance, which makes much use of that scrunchy-eyed smile of his, is one of utter charm. Sundays and Mondays only. (11/26/01) (Vivian Beaumont, Lincoln Center. 239-6200.)

SURVIVING GRACE

A play by Trish Vradenburg, about a fraught mother-and-daughter relationship. Ileana Douglas and Doris Belack star. Jack Hofsis directs. (Union Square Theatre, 100 E. 17th St. 307-7171.)

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ON AND OFF THE AVENUE

Get on the Bus

Twenty minutes after it leaves the Port Authority, the free weekend bus to IKEA in Elizabeth, New Jersey (New Jersey Turnpike, exit 13A; 908-289-4488; 800-BUS-IKEA), pulls up to the store and a load of slightly befuddled Manhattanites—

lunch at a picture window and watch the planes take off from Newark International Airport, or you can wolf down your food and wander over to the parapet outside the café. The balcony overlooks a vast underground storehouse holding



among them a couple with buzz cuts and khakis who resemble the people in Ikea's TV ads and a woman in a fur toque who looks as though she leaves the Upper East Side only for the Hamptons—enter the shop's rotunda and glance around, in vain, for help. No actual employees are in evidence; in their stead is an abundance of encouraging signage. "Got a question? The tag has the answers," says one placard. "You can do it yourself!"

Ikea's stylish, inexpensive merchandise may hail from Sweden, but it has a distinctly Manhattan feel. The first model room you come to, at the top of the escalator, features a sleeping alcove made private by a curtain of creatively deployed mosquito netting—just the kind of solution that might occur to a space-strapped New Yorker. Despite the place's low-glamour reputation, some of the goods on display evince an undeniable chic—where else can you find an Art Deco chest with a wavy façade and drawer pulls the shape of Gauloises (\$159), or a plastic chair shaped like R2-D2 and as translucent as a gummy bear (\$12.95)? The clientele, on the other hand, seems slightly frazzled. "We have to leave now! We'll buy you a toy!" one father says as he tries to maneuver his child away from the ball room, a glassed-in tank where the youngest shoppers can gambol.

Next door, in the restaurant, the balls are made of meat, and they're almost as renowned as the furniture—there's even an express meatball lane (ten for \$3.95). With meatballs in hand, you can eat

stacks of cardboard boxes full of furniture—Magiker entertainment centers made of particleboard, Plugg kitchen cabinets sporting real pine doors, and Tromsnes lacquered steel beds with brass finials—as far and high as the eye can see.

A visit to the stockroom itself makes it immediately clear why Ikea can sell divans for less than two hundred dollars—and it also explains why you may want to pay the extra money to have the store deliver the merchandise to your apartment rather than lugging it home yourself. "C'mon honey, it's light!" a man is saying to his girlfriend, who doesn't seem to relish the idea of toting a set of library shelves on her back. By the look on her face, she appears to be questioning the whole relationship. Still, the challenge of doing it yourself doesn't daunt most patrons of the free bus. The line to cram flat-packed tables and chairs into the luggage hold is tense; overhead-bin space is as rare as a rent-controlled ten-room apartment. Two young women in shearling coats are threatening their fellow-passengers with a sackful of paper lampshades; another guy is sagging under the weight of what must be a hundred ninety-five-cent tumblers. A woman in a pair of jeans cut low to reveal two inches of bare stomach is making the trip back to Manhattan with a pink-and-orange mosaic-trimmed wall mirror sitting on her lap, and she looks triumphant. When she gets it home she can tell everyone she picked it up at Porte de Clignancourt.

—Lynn Yaeger

MARCELUS HALL

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Orange with Attitude.

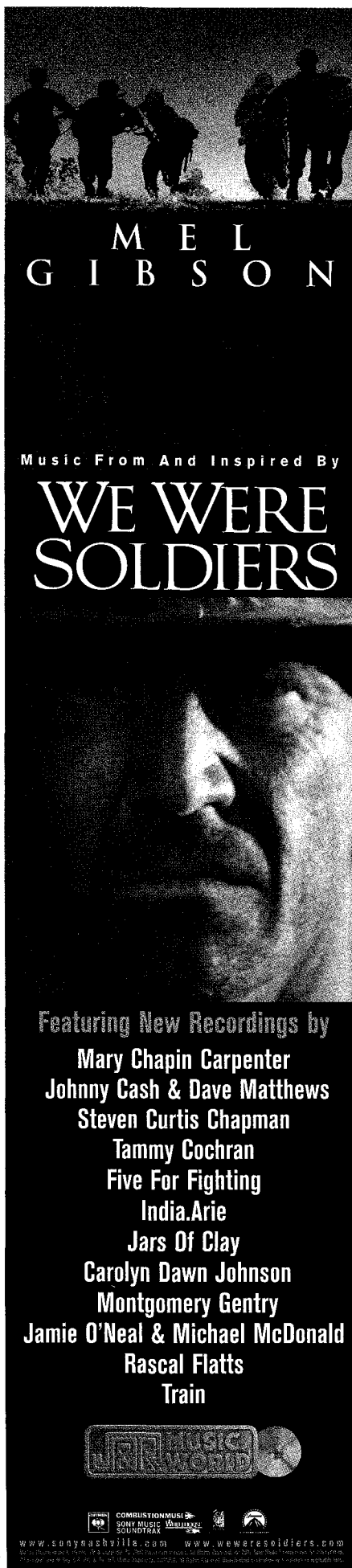
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TAPE

Having seen the recent movie adaptation starring the marquee actors Ethan Hawke, Uma Thurman, and Robert Sean Leonard is no excuse for skipping Stephen Belber's terrific play about three high-school friends (Dominic Fumusa, Josh Stamberg, and Alison West), who years after graduation find themselves unexpectedly hashing out the aftereffects of a traumatic sexual incident that has haunted each of them in different ways. This Off Broadway production, nicely directed by Geoffrey Nauffts, has one thing in particular that the movie could never claim to have: the funny-sad, love-hate chemistry that endures between two true friends, Fumusa and Stamberg, for whom the play was written; it's something to see. (\$34 W. 42nd St. 244-7529. Closes March 16.)

THROW PITCHFORK

A one-man show by Alexander Thomas, in which he explores growing up black in a family with three brothers and an alcoholic father. (New York Theatre Workshop, 79 E. 4th St. 460-5475.)

TO YOU, THE BIRDIE! (PHÈDRE)

Frances McDormand, Kate Valk, and Willem Dafoe lead the cast in the Wooster Group's latest work, based on Racine's "Phèdre." (St. Ann's Warehouse, 38 Water St. Brooklyn. 966-3651.)

UNEQUALIBRIUM

A contemporary one-man variation on Homer's Odyssey, starring Alexander Lyras. (Gene Frankel Theatre, 24 Bond St. 462-3107.)

URINETOWN

The amount of fun to be had at this musical, by Greg Kotis (book and lyrics) and Mark Hollmann (music and lyrics), is in direct proportion to the unpleasantness of its title. Its central idea is that an evil corporation controls all the toilets in a city that bears some resemblance to New York, but the show is really no more and no less than a terrifically spirited sendup of musicals and their conventions, as self-conscious and gag-happy as a Warner Bros. cartoon. (10/10/1 (Henry Miller, 124 W. 43rd St. 239-6200.)

DANCE

FLAMENCO VIVO CARLOTA SANTANA

The fourteen-member company provides a time line of flamenco's evolution in "Bailaor/Bailaora," and evokes the form's traditional setting in "En el Café de Chinitas." (Joyce Theatre, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800. March 12-15 at 8, March 16 at 2 and 8, and March 17 at 2 and 7:30.)

"BYRD-LESQUE"

The choreographer Donald Byrd presents a child-friendly mini-retrospective of his works, in seventy-five minutes, with excerpts from such pieces as "Not the Shack," "Folk Dance," and "Drastic Cuts." (New Victory Theatre, 209 W. 42nd St., near Broadway. 239-6200. March 14-15 at 7, March 16 at 2 and 7, and March 17 at noon and 5.)

"POON"

Jordana Toback is best known for the glam-rock robot numbers she choreographed for the smoke-and-feathers, eighties-revival band Fischerspooner, but for her own show, at Club Lucca, in South Williamsburg, her work as a kundalini-yoga instructor is perhaps more to the point. "Earthy sensuality is what this show is about," the thirty-three-year-old choreographer proclaims. "It's the sexy dancing of strip clubs but without the stripping or the stuffing of money in women's panties." Decked out in lavender corsets and fluffed-up Botticellian hair in one number and skin-tight jumpsuits in another, four women mix moves from belly dancing and Bollywood musicals with graphic gestures (fanned hands framing the crotch, for example) that are, Toback says, "total Jordana." Tom Rossi's live drumming blends with a taped ethno-techno score. (Club Lucca, 256 Grand St., near Driggs Ave., Brooklyn. 718-599-1000. March 15-16 at 9:30 and 11:30.)

WIL SWANSON/DANCEWORKS

"To make a dance beautiful, you need to throw energy across space," says the former Trisha Brown dancer Wil Swanson. In the three hypnotic, abstract pieces on the program (one is a premiere), an action on one part of the stage seems to cause a reaction somewhere else, as if the six dancers were attached by

POP NOTES



AN ALBUM OF ONE'S OWN

From the opening trumpet-and-saxophone volley of Sarah Shannon's self-titled debut (Casa Recording Co.), it is clear that the singer is finished with the basic guitar-drum-and-bass setup of her indie-rock past, when she was the front woman for the introspective pop outfit Velocity Girl. Here, Shannon (who plays the Knitting Factory this week) has assembled a small orchestra of horns, strings, and woodwinds, and the result is a warm paean to the power of the imagination. The songs cover familiar subjects, mostly love sought and love lost, but the album isn't a delicate collection of wilting chamber pop. "I'll Run Away," which is propelled by the piano work of collaborator Blake Wescott (he produced the album and co-wrote a number of its songs), is a strongly defiant piece reminiscent of Carole King. "What's Mine" bumps and grinds along on Wescott's guitar chords, and it includes the staunch chorus "I don't want to waste your time, but I got a feeling you've got what's mine." The best part of the record, though, is Shannon's wonderful voice, which makes each song a gem.

"While You Weren't Looking" (Yep Roc Records) is the solo debut by Caitlin Cary, a former violinist and backing vocalist for the alternative-country group Whiskeytown. The album has the feel of a group project; Cary gets songwriting help (from, among others, her former bandmate Ryan Adams) on all but one of the tracks and submits to the firm hand of the noted jangle-pop producer Chris Stamey. But Cary's solid alto, with its hints of Dar Williams and Emmylou Harris, keeps songs about missed opportunities, lengthy apologies, beloved ponies, and country fairs from descending into the cruel pit of country-music clichés. And such up-tempo, horn-driven pieces as "Too Many Keys" and the half-waltz, half-honky-tonk "Hold On to Me" lend the album just enough variety to warrant repeated listenings.

The second full-length solo release from Mirah (née Mirah Yom Tov Zeitlyn), "Advisory Committee" (K Records), is understated but hardly subdued. Mirah, who also performs with the neopsychedelic-pop group the Microphones, sings with a gusty whisper and plays the guitar with languid tension. A panoply of found sounds and electronic effects lifts the album above the straight-faced pose that is so common in indie rock; the title track is layered with steel drums and the odd melodica, while eerie strings haunt "Special Death." At its best, Mirah's music is haunting and otherworldly: "Make It Hot" suggests what Nico might have created had she actually been able to sing.

—John J. Donohue

electric strings, or as if a stone had just skipped across their current. (92nd Street Y Harkness Dance Project at the Duke, 229 W. 42nd St. 239-6200. March 13-14 and March 16 at 8 and March 17 at 2 and 7.)

CORNFIELD DANCE

Meredith Monk once joked that spunky Ellen Cornfield was the only human being in Merce Cunningham's troupe (she performed with them from 1974 to 1982). Now, as a choreographer, Cornfield imbues Cunningham geometries with human expression and even Grahamesque psychological suggestion. The duet "Foreshadowed Seeing," for example, sets Jeffrey Bauer and Cornfield beside their own gigantic shadows, projected onto the back scrim. And, while it's easy to see the Cunningham influence in the buoyant, space-devouring quintet "Velcro Road," the constant clustering and dispersing of these dancers, Cornfield says, did not happen by chance. (Merce Cunningham Studio, 55 Bethune St. 924-0077. March 15 at 9 and March 16-17 at 8.)

"QUANTUM"

The collective Ameye (short for "amplified eye"), founded by Mei-Yin Ng and Eyeala, presents an

evening-length work that combines choreography and special effects, using the bodies of the dancers as a canvas. (P.S. 122, 150 First Ave., at 9th St. 477-5288. March 14-17 at 8:30.)

"THE NIGHT A METEOR FELL THROUGH MY ROOF"

The choreographer Kate Gyllenhaal makes a snapshot-style record of "those moments when you turn a corner," which she gathered from her family, friends, and friends of friends. Their stories serve as the soundtrack for this evening-length collage of duets, solos, and group pieces. (Dixon Place, 309 E. 26th St., near Second Ave. 532-1546. March 14 at 8.)

"LOVE AFTER DEATH"

The choreographer Julia Ritter makes a full-length work about grieving, inspired by roadside shrines. (University Settlement, 184 Eldridge St. 924-0077. March 15-16 at 8.)

NIGHT LIFE CONCERTS

BUSH

Despite its best efforts to change with the times, this London foursome still remains yoked to grunge rock circa 1992, thanks to its guitar bombast and the photogenic front man Gavin Rossdale's anguished, Cobainesque howl. Now that the alternative boom is over, Bush is better known as the band of Gwen Stefani's fiancé. Facing the prospect of becoming an early-nineties nostalgia act should finally give Rossdale a reason for his angst. (Hammerstein Ballroom, Manhattan Center, 311 W. 34th St. 307-7171. March 14-15 at 8.)

"DUETS ON THE HUDSON"

The lyrical trumpeter Warren Vache, Jr., and the gifted pianist Bill Charlap share a bill with the fervent pianist John Hicks and the resourceful vibraphonist Joe Locke. (Kaplan Penthouse, Lincoln Center. 721-6500. March 14-16 at 8.)

WORLD MUSIC INSTITUTE

A three-night festival of Greek music and dance. March 15 at 8: The violinist Nikos Ikonomidis joins the Keros Music Ensemble for songs from the islands. With the Akrites Dance Troupe. ♦ March 16 at 8: A program of music and dance from Cyprus, Kárpáthos, and the Greek-speaking villages of southern Italy, with the Michael Tterlikkas, the Michalis Zografidis, and the Ghetonia Music ensembles. Also with the Akrites troupe. ♦ March 17 at 8: The singer Manolis Mitsias and the Trichordo Bouzouki Ensemble present songs from the early *rembetika*, or "Greek blues," period and by the modern composers Mikis Theodorakis and Manos Hadjidakis. (Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St. For more information, call 545-7536.)

THE CHIEFTAINS

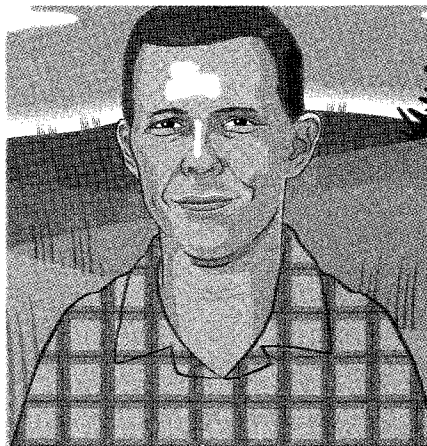
Celebrating forty years on the road, the well-known traditional Irish outfit has a new CD, "The Wide World Over," that features appearances by everyone from Joni Mitchell to Elvis Costello to Ziggy Marley to members of the Chinese Traditional Ensemble. (Avery Fisher Hall. 721-6500. March 17 at 8.)

CLUBS

Musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated lives; it's advisable to call ahead to confirm engagements.

B. B. KING BLUES CLUB & GRILL

237 W. 42nd St. (997-4144)—March 15: Gritty Irish rock with the Prodigals. March 16: The drummer Stanton Moore takes a break from his full-time job in the rhythm section of the funky New Orleans outfit Galactic. The bassist Chris Wood, of Medeski and Martin fame, joins him here, along with other Crescent City musicians. March 17: One of the finest practitioners of contemporary Celtic music, the Donegal-based sextet Altan is capable of segueing from tender jigs to passionate bouzouki-driven raveups in a single tune. The group's latest album, "The Blue Idol," again showcases the otherworldly voice of vocalist Mairéad Ní Mhaonaigh.



Robbie Fulks rolls into Maxwell's and the Mercury Lounge this week.

BLARNEY STAR

43 Murray St. (732-2873)—March 15-16: The Blarney Star Band features the County Mayo button accordionist Dermot Grogan and his compatriot singer and accordionist Andrew Gillespie. Rounding out the band are the fiddler Don Meade and the guitarist and bouzouki player John Dillon.

BOWERY BALLROOM

6 Delancey St. (533-2111)—March 18: Bursting out of the British "big beat" scene in 1998, the Lo-Fidelity Allstars scored a major single with "Battle-flag," a rollicking dreadnought of funk-out electronica with a rock-and-roll swagger. As a result of inevitable "creative differences," the Allstars have since undergone a series of crucial personnel changes but remain committed to carefree dance-floor hedonism. March 19-20: The youthful Irish rabble-rousers in Ash seek to distinguish themselves from other poppy punk acts like their American cousins Blink-182 and Green Day through amped-up performances and sartorial provocation—the lead singer Tim Wheeler favors T-shirts emblazoned with the phrase "I Hate the Beatles."

GALAPAGOS

70 North 6th St., Williamsburg (718-782-5188)—March 15: Big Lazy, the elegantly gritty instrumental trio led by the extraordinary guitarist Stephen Ulrich, plays beautiful music that evokes everything from truckers' romps to the haunting film scores of Bernard Herrmann.

IRVING PLAZA

17 Irving Pl., at 15th St. (777-6800)—March 13-14: Two longtime practitioners of highly stylized Southern irreverence—Texas's aggressive Reverend Horton Heat and Georgia's libidinous Nashville Pussy (their moniker comes from a Ted Nugent allusion, not the city)—serve up hell-raising hilarity. The Reverend specializes in rockabilly revival, while his co-headliners bare their midriffs in the name of fire-spewing punk-metal fusion.

KNITTING FACTORY

74 Leonard St., between Broadway and Church St. (219-3055)—March 14: During their ten-year recording career, the English rockers Hood have experimented with a broad variety of musical styles. On their two 2001 releases, "Home Is Where It Hurts" and "Cold House," the band dips into melancholy pop and the clicks and beats of electronica and hip-hop. March 16: Celtic rock with Black 47, the band named for the worst year of Ireland's nineteenth-century potato famine. March 17: Sarah Shannon, the former lead singer of Velocity Girl, stops by with her orchestra and songs from her self-titled debut solo album.

MAXWELL'S

1039 Washington St., Hoboken (201-653-1703)—March 15: Of the artists who have come to prominence during the recent alternative-country movement, Robbie Fulks is perhaps the one who flirts most closely with the traditional Nashville structure. Until recently he regularly travelled to Tennessee from his home in Chicago to pitch songs on Music Row. After surviving an almost predictable major-

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PLUS: A calendar of
New Yorker events
across the country

label disaster, 1998's pop-influenced "Let's Kill Saturday Night," Fulks has returned to form with two albums that showcase his mordant lyrics, including the ambitious "Couples in Trouble" and "13 Hill-billy Giants," in which he covers his favorite country songwriters.

MERCURY LOUNGE

217 E. Houston St. (260-4700)—March 15: **Rogue's March**, Joe Hurley's band of bawdy Irish rockers. March 17: **Robbie Fulks** (see Maxwell's).

TONIC

107 Norfolk St. (358-7503)—March 15: **The Captain Beefheart Project**. The guitarist and onetime Beefheart co-conspirator Gary Lucas (a veteran of the early eighties' "Ice Cream for Crow" years) and Phillip Johnston, the avant-garde jazzman and arranger, lead a seven-piece instrumental band on a mission to reinterpret the Captain's compositions. March 16: The evocative Brazilian guitarist **Vinicius Cantuária** performs an early program of acoustic love songs from his native country, followed by sets with his band.

VILLAGE UNDERGROUND

130 W. 3rd St. (777-7745)—March 16: **Hamell on Trial**. A thorny folk troubadour who traded in his Pete Seeger records for albums by Lou Reed and Iggy Pop, Ed Hamell delivers dicey urban narratives like a one-man Scorsese flick.

interpreter of the Great American Songbook, has travelled that unlikely trail, recasting classic material along the way. Dining.

BIRDLAND

315 W. 44th St. (581-3080)—March 14-16: The **Roy Haynes** quartet. Having played with Lester Young, Charlie Parker, and John Coltrane, the drummer Haynes could very well rest on his laurels. Instead, he takes his role as elder statesman very seriously, nurturing new talent and handing down the secrets of the art of leading an airtight small group. Dining.

BLUE NOTE

131 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (475-8592)—Through March 17: The whirlwind trumpeter **Arturo Sandoval** has never hid his affection for the piano, but now he's taken the plunge, parking his horn on the side and turning to the keyboard for a new album, "My Passion for the Piano," and a run of characteristically fulsome playing informed by bebop and his Cuban roots.

CARLYLE HOTEL

Madison Ave. at 76th St. (744-1600)—The Café Carlyle, a snug, windowless enclave in the doorman district, features discreet waiters, wraparound murals, and, through March 23, **David Campbell**. Relying more on his youthful energy, Aussie wit, and an offbeat repertoire rather than on his serviceable

JOE'S PUB

425 Lafayette St. (539-8777)—March 18: The trumpeter **Dave Douglas's** new album, "The Infinite," calls on the inspiration of Miles Davis, but Douglas is far too individual a player and conceptualist to merely ape the legendary hornman; instead he uses his predilection for nonstandard rhythms in covering songs by Rufus Wainwright, Macy Gray, and Björk to pay tribute to Davis's inclusive tastes.

VILLAGE VANGUARD

178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (255-4037)—Through March 17: Concluding a two-week run at this venerable club, trumpeter **Roy Hargrove** and his seasoned quintet deliver a steady stream of hard-bop plentitude and warming solos from a player who finds continued sustenance in a genre that peaked a full decade before his birth. The **Vanguard Jazz Orchestra** holds sway on Mondays.

ART

MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

METROPOLITAN MUSEUM

Fifth Ave. at 82nd St. (879-5500)—"Surrealism: Desire Unbound" is a big, fairly resistible show, with scattered delights, that labors to pump up the long-deflated blimp of Surrealism with a panting emphasis on sex. There's fine work by Picasso, Miró, and Giacometti, but the more orthodox dream illustrations of Dali, Ernst, and so on look more tired than ever. The show's strong suits are erotic photography and drawing; its man of the hour is Hans Bellmer, the weird German whose indelibly shocking photos of anatomically preposterous female dolls are back in vogue these days. Through May 5. ♦ "Orazio and Artemisia Gentileschi: Father and Daughter Painters in Baroque Italy." Virtually the only woman painter among the fraternity of Old Masters, Artemisia Gentileschi has inspired novels, films, and a current play, thanks in part to speculation about her romantic misfortunes. Was she raped by her father's colleague? Or was she simply, as one sixties-era scholar put it, "a lascivious and precocious girl" who sued her lover for not making good on his marriage promises? Either way, she was a painter of great and often grisly refinement, as this dual survey makes clear. Like Caravaggio, who inspired their realist style, the Gentileschis didn't skimp on skin, gold, velvet, or violence; Artemisia's depiction of Judith modelling a low-cut blue gown as she beheads a struggling Holofernes is a cleavage picture in both senses. While Artemisia rarely equalled the delicacy of her father's naturalism, she had a more focussed eye for narrative nuance: note the way Judith has rolled up her sleeves before getting to work. Through May 12. ♦ "Earthly Bodies: Irving Penn's Nudes, 1949-50." Through April 21. ♦ "Benjamin Brecknell Turner: Rural England Through a Victorian Lens." Through April 21. ♦ "Splendid Isolation: Art of Easter Island." Through Aug. 4. (Open Tuesdays through Sundays, 9:30 to 5:30, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 9.)

MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

11 W. 53rd St. (708-9480)—"Gerhard Richter: Forty Years of Painting." Gerhard Richter has worked in many styles since 1961, when he escaped from East Germany. They include mordant variations on Pop art, hauntingly beautiful Photo-Realist paintings in several genres, abstracts that convey self-doubt with panache, and a fifteen-canvas masterpiece of history painting, about the deaths in 1977 of Baader-Meinhof terrorists who had convulsed Germany for a decade. Previously seen piecemeal here, his art has struck many as tricky and cold, but it turns out that it aches with emotion. Richter's love of painting, in a tense relationship with his fierce skepticism, generates sustained intellectual drama with regular bonuses of rapture. This show may redraw the map of painting's place in the wider culture. Through May 21. ♦ "Life of the City." The museum offers a belated and somewhat misguided valentine to New York City in a show that combines photographs of the city from the permanent collection with an ever-changing installation of images solicited from amateurs. (Guidelines for participation are detailed in an at-



TWO HEADS ARE BETTER THAN ONE In Orazio Gentileschi's "Judith and Her Maidservant" (1608-09), the Hebrew heroine, having beheaded Holofernes, ponders her next move. As the Met's exhilarating show of works by Orazio and his better-known daughter, Artemisia, makes clear, themes of sex and violence run in the family. Often father and daughter treat the same material; Artemisia's gory version of the decapitation may well be, for lovingly nuanced shock, the "Psycho" shower scene of the Italian baroque. —Peter Schjeldahl

WARSAW

261 Driggs Ave., Brooklyn (718-387-5252)—March 15: **Hood** (see the Knitting Factory).

JAZZ AND STANDARDS

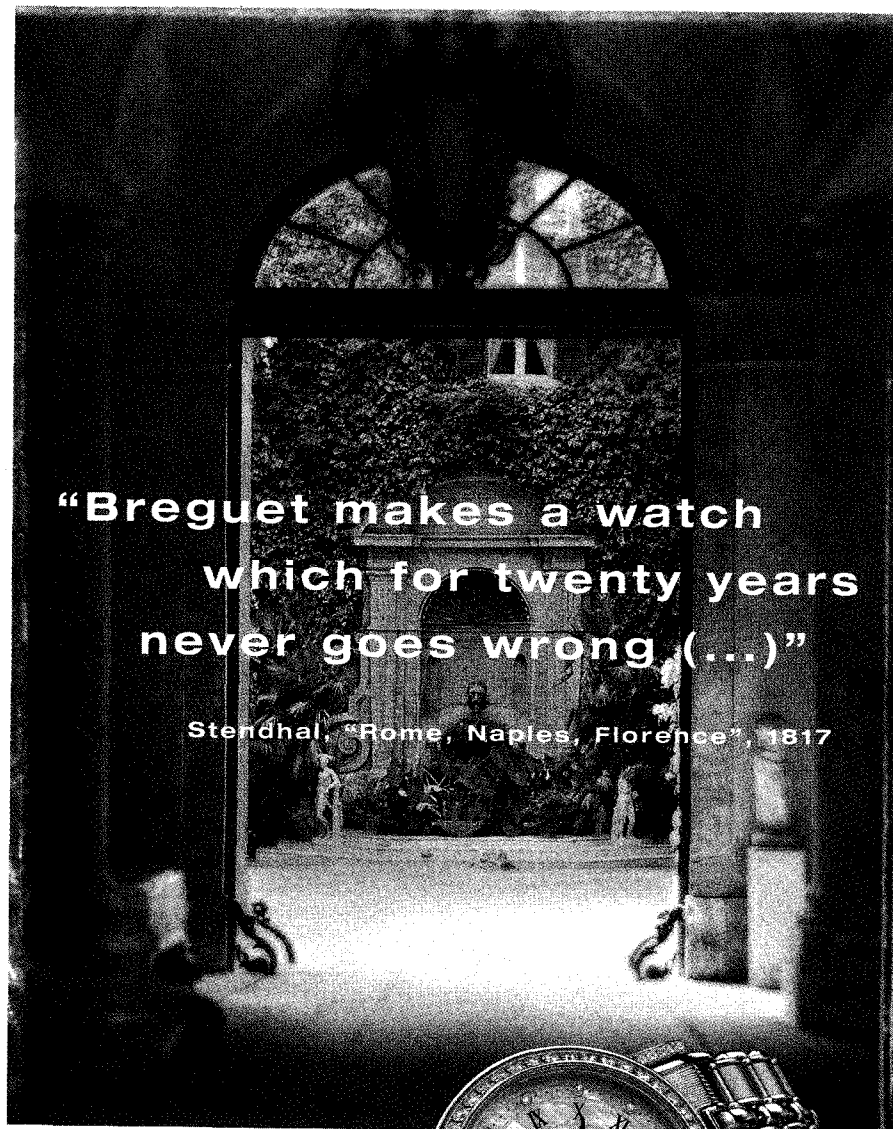
ALGONQUIN HOTEL

59 W. 44th St. (840-6800)—Through March 30: It's quite the journey from Boggy Depot, Oklahoma, to the Algonquin Room, but KT Sullivan, a knowing

voice, Campbell charms his way through an agreeable program that finds room for songs ranging from Rogers and Hart to Crowded House.

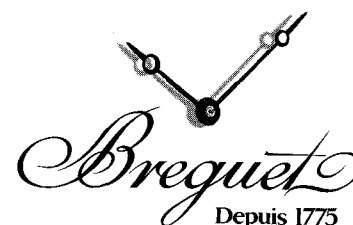
FEINSTEIN'S AT THE REGENCY

540 Park Ave., at 61st St. (339-4095)—Through March 16: You loved him in "Barney Miller," but did you know that **Hal Linden** won a Tony Award for the 1974 Broadway musical "The Rothschilds" before he took on the role of the endearing police captain? Returning to the musical stage, Linden presents favorite stage tunes that will restore memories of his earlier triumphs.



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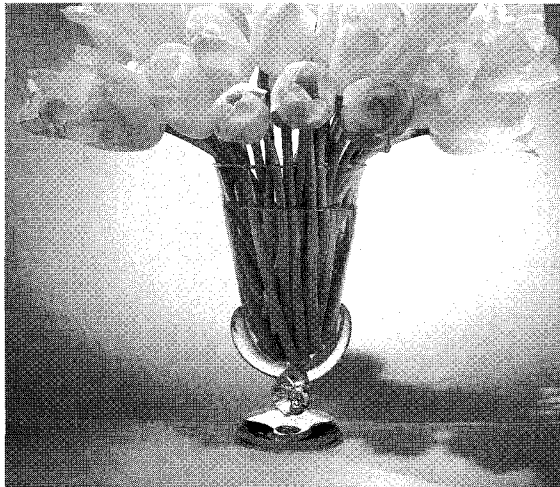
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tendant brochure.) The first section spans the last century and includes almost a hundred and fifty pictures by a mix of artists and photojournalists, hung salon-style in thematic groupings. (One playful cluster features portraits of picture takers, including Weegee in a paddy wagon in 1940 and Robert Frank capturing his own reflection in a window in 1947). The unattributed contributions by present-day shutterbugs, ranging from casual family snapshots to street scenes worthy of Helen Leavitt, are tacked to the wall with pushpins. The aesthetic hierarchy implicit in the differing presentations undercuts the curator's supposedly egalitarian initiative. Through May 21. (Open Saturdays through Tuesdays, and Thursdays, 10:30 to 5:45; Fridays, 10:30 to 8:15.)

GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM

Fifth Ave. at 89th St. (423-3500)—“Brazil: Body and Soul.” Through May 29. (Open Sundays through Wednesdays, 9 to 6; Fridays and Saturdays, 9 to 8.)

WHITNEY MUSEUM OF AMERICAN ART

Madison Ave. at 75th St. (570-3676)—The museum throws its largest Biennial since 1981, with 113 artists working in about that many mediums. Through May 26. (Open Tuesdays through Thursdays, and weekends, 11 to 6; Fridays, 1 to 9.)

BROOKLYN MUSEUM OF ART

Eastern Parkway (718-638-5000)—“Jewish Life in Ancient Egypt” presents eight of the world's best preserved papyri, part of the museum's collection, which originated in a Jewish settlement, Elephantine Island, eight hundred years after the Exodus from Egypt. Through May 12. (Open Wednesdays through Fridays, 10 to 5; Saturdays and Sundays, 11 to 6.)

MORGAN LIBRARY

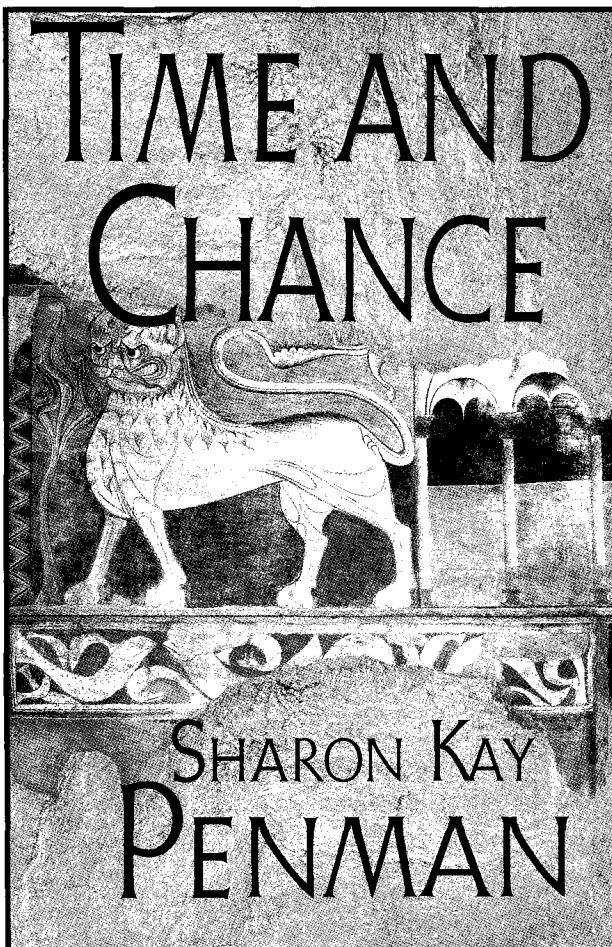
29 E. 36th St. (685-0008)—“Pierre Matisse and His Artists” is a delectable show about a Fifty-seventh Street gallery, founded in 1931, which showed Miró, Balthus, Giacometti, Calder, Dubuffet, and other great moderns in their heydays, sometimes including the owner's father, Henri. Masterworks that were sold by Pierre (who died in 1989) have been assembled, many from museums, along with perhaps the best things you'll ever see by secondary figures like Tanguy, Matta, and Lam and by such minor talents as Riopelle and Reg Butler. The pitch of connoisseurship is sky high. Photographs, letters, and other documents reanimate a time when modern art was the best revenge. Through May 19. (Open Tuesdays through Thursdays, 10:30 to 5; Fridays, 10:30 to 8; Saturdays, 10:30 to 6; Sundays, noon to 6.)

NEW MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY ART

583 Broadway (219-1222)—This drawing retrospective marks the first American museum exhibition for the Cape Town-born, Amsterdam-based artist Marlene Dumas. Her ink-wash and watercolor drawings often have a physical touch so light they make the Shroud of Turin look like impasto, but her subject matter—racial prejudice, sexual perversion, religious piety—sandbags the levity with its blunt, even confrontational approach. The most powerful drawings here are presented cumulatively in grids, as in the more than a hundred “Black Drawings,” anonymous head shots that range from a thug in a ski mask to a shy little girl. (Dumas's figures are all drawn from photographic material.) Whimsy does crop up occasionally, as in the Barbie doll with preternaturally blue eyes, though Dumas's palette is typically sombre and stain-colored—dirt browns and dried-blood rusts. Through June 2. (Open Wednesdays and Sundays, noon to 6; Thursdays through Saturdays, noon to 8.)

P.S. 1 CONTEMPORARY ART CENTER

22-25 Jackson Ave., at 46th Ave., Long Island City (718-784-2084)—Don't be put off by the worthy aura of “The Short Century: Independence and Liberation Movements in Africa, 1945-1994,” a huge exhibition that was organized by the Museum Villa Stuck in Munich. It's an exciting experience. Displays devoted to art, photography, film, music, architecture, and literature illuminate the continent in its most tumultuous era. Never less than handsome and cogent, the show is a landmark model of how such things should be done. Through May 5. (Open Wednesdays through Sundays, noon to 6.)



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GALLERIES-UPTOWN

Unless otherwise noted, galleries are open Tuesdays through Saturdays, from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6.

MAX BECKMANN

Sculpture was an important sideline for Matisse and Picasso, but their great German counterpart took up the medium late—at age fifty—and never even made a dozen works. The eight he did complete are here, accompanied by a chorus of paintings and prints. Most are minor pleasures, seductively chunky tabletop bronzes that read as stepchildren of Degas. Two larger works—a rigid Adam and Eve and a giant self-portrait head—are unqualified knockouts, demonstrations of Beckmann's feeling for what he called "the full, round, vivaciously pulsing aspect of life." Through May 24. (Feigen, 34 E. 69th St. 628-0700.)

CECILY BROWN

Brown's modestly sized, casually frantic new paintings evoke the phrase "a dab hand." Jumbled, wristy strokes fill the middle grounds of vestigial landscapes, hinting at rampant flora and fauna (rabbits materialize in one picture). Colors are itchily sensual and Bacon-like, and the rumpled pictorial space suggests molten Cubism. Brown's drive to resurrect an art of painterly virtuosity for its own sake produces awkward but pleasing exertion, like that of a friendly massage. These are parlor paintings; they seethe winningly from about ten feet away and languish at any greater distance. Through March 16. (Gagosian, 980 Madison Ave., at 76th St. 744-2313.)

KATHY BUTTERLY

Butterly, who studied with the California funk ceramist Robert Arneson, makes sculptures that inherit his crafty goofiness on a miniature scale. Most of her hyperwhimsical objets are vessels of a sort—you could pour liquid into them. Each little pepper-grinder-like piece is a 3-D game of exquisite corpse,

morphing wildly from lustrous glazed swellings to bizarre protrusions that suggest lichens, bricks, filaments, snoods, and snowshoes. Through March 16. (De Nagy, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. 262-5050.)

DAVID HUMPHREY

A tiny but charming show of sculptures made from overpainted kitsch. In the silliest and most memorable of the set, "Pillow Diver," a stuffed animal disappears head first into a Brancusian column, leaving behind only its bright-pink paws. Perhaps because he's better known as a painter, Humphrey can sneak into the territory of Mike Kelley and Jeff Koons and emerge smirkless and unscathed. Through March 23. (Littlejohn, 41 E. 57th St. 980-2323.)

BILL JENSEN

Jensen's latest works on paper are as lovely as ever: spare slashed precincts of Ab-Ex calligraphy with just enough scraping and splashing to give them a veneer—but why does it feel so emphatically like a veneer?—of brusque integrity. Through March 15. (Danese, 41 E. 57th St. 223-2227.)

RICHARD PATTERSON

The British gimmick addict has been sucked into Gerhard Richter's giant wake: in these sexy, smart, derivative works, he offers Photo-Realist renderings of seventies-era photographs (the best of them is a still from "Midnight Cowboy") overpainted with abstract brushwork. Richter himself has combined his two modes (photo appropriation and abstraction that relies on a dragged palette knife) on occasion, but Patterson does it with an epigone's finesse. Through March 23. (James Cohan, 41 W. 57th St. 755-7171.)

Short List

JOHN BALDESSARI

Marian Goodman, 24 W. 57th St. 977-7160. Through March 30.

STEPHEN VITIELLO

The Project, 427 W. 126th St. 662-8610. Through March 17.

GALLERIES-CHELSEA

ANNIKA LARSSON

This young Swedish artist makes an impressive New York debut with a pair of DVD projections that elegantly lampoon male power and dominance with the high production values and absurd narrative implications of an aftershave commercial. In "Dog" (2001), two men, both dressed in impeccable gray suits, eye each other with erotic, even sado-masochistic overtones across the leash of a big gray dog. As the music shifts back and forth disarmingly between electronica and a classical march, tension builds, and the imagery unfolds with what Sergei Eisenstein once described as "those extraordinary closeup details that hit the spectator between the eyes like a hammer." Through March 23. (Rosen, 525 W. 24th St. 627-6000.)

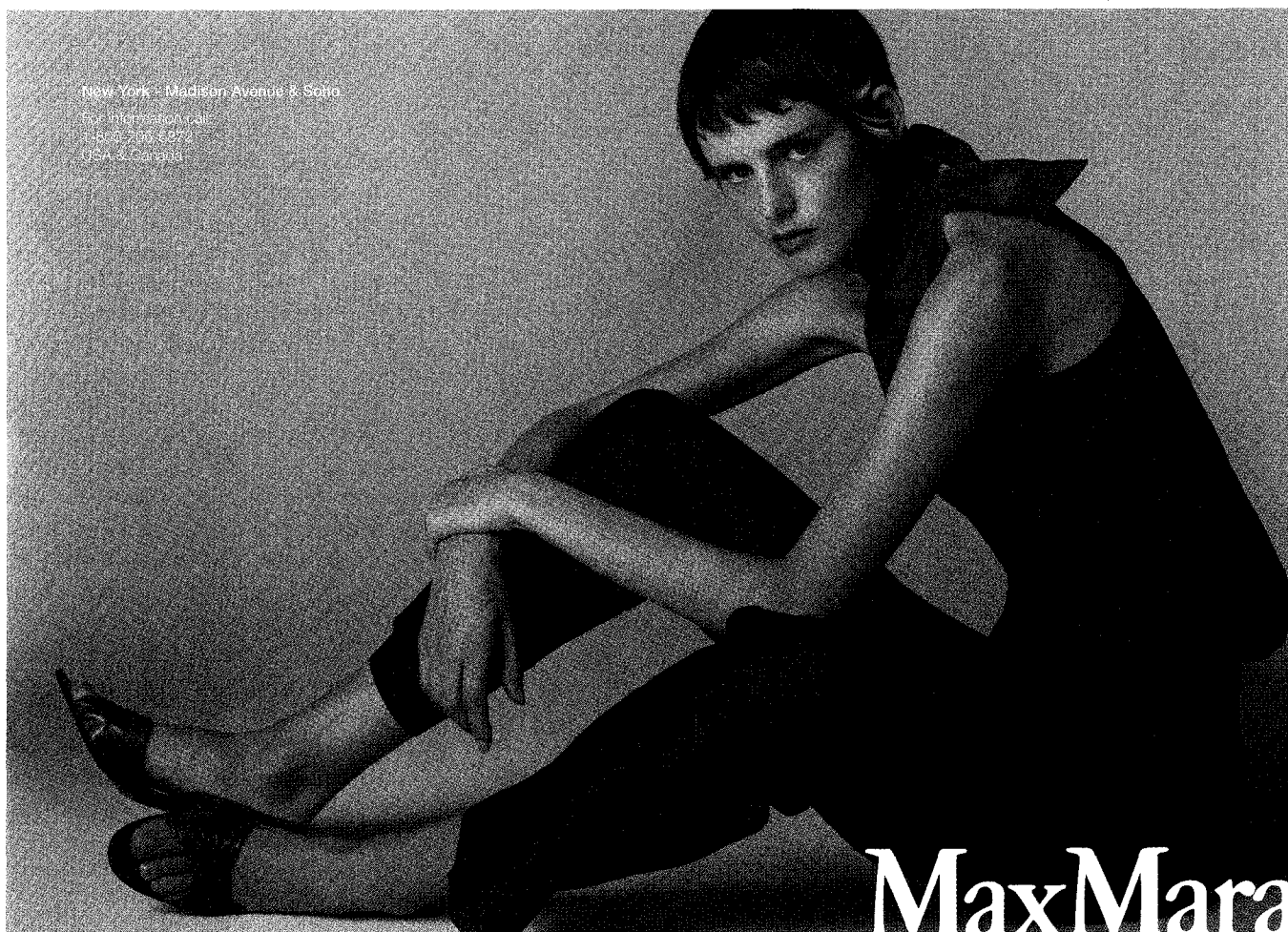
SIMON STARLING

The gallery confirms its penchant for poetic Conceptualists (Jason Dodge, Liam Gillick, Carsten Holler) with the New York debut of this young Scottish artist. Two birdhouses occupied by yellow songbirds—not starlings—are installed flush with the ceiling, perched atop tree branches of tropical hardwood. They're mirror-image, one-fifth scale models of a single unit in a housing complex designed by modernist architect Simon Schmiderer, based on the principles of twelve-tone music, developed by Arnold Schoenberg. Happily, the installation strikes an appealing balance between cerebral and winsome, with or without the elaborate back story. Through March 28. (Casey Kaplan, 416 W. 14th St. 645-7335.)

Short List

JOY EPISALLA

Debs, 525 W. 26th St. 643-2070. Through March 23.



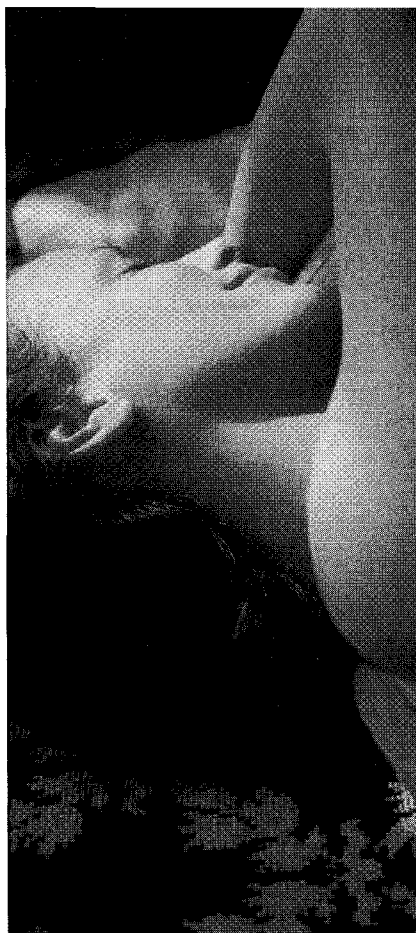
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Matthew Marks, 523 W. 24th St. 243-0200.
Through April 20.

GALLERIES-DOWNTOWN

KIM SOOJA
Mirrors line the gallery walls, reflecting scores of parti-colored silk bedcovers strung on rows of clothesline by clothespins. (The artist salvaged the textiles in her native South Korea, where newlyweds traditionally use them to symbolize good fortune.) The fabric sways in a breeze provided by overhead fans to an accompanying soundtrack of chanting monks and ringing bells that lends a beatific air to the installation. Associations drift from the mundane to the profound, as a cheery laundry day gives way to an infinite labyrinth of bliss. Through May 18. (Blum, 99 Wooster St. 343-0441.)

Short List

ELEANOR ANTIN
Feldman, 31 Mercer St. 226-3232.
Through March 16.
TIM HAWKINSON
Ace, 275 Hudson St. 255-5599.
Through March 30.
MARLENE MCCARTY
Keenan, 3 Crosby St. 431-5083.
Through March 23.

GALLERIES-BROOKLYN

GARY PANTER
Panter, who won three Emmy awards for his design work on "Pee-wee's Playhouse," has re-created his own adolescent clubhouse in an installation that he describes as "an outgrowth of light shows I did in my garage in the sixties." Viewers can lounge on a low couch and watch Panter's stoners' paradise of light and shadow. They can also peek behind the curtain to find the wizard and his flashlight-bearing assistants in a complex dance around a wooden scaffold hung with paper snowflakes, reflectors, filters, and a disco ball. Through March 18; call for show times. (Pierogi, 177 N. 9th St., Williamsburg. 718-599-2144.)

Short List

ANNIE COGGAN
A: D/B Project Space, 116 S. Portland Ave.
718-855-9394. Through March 16.

PHOTOGRAPHY

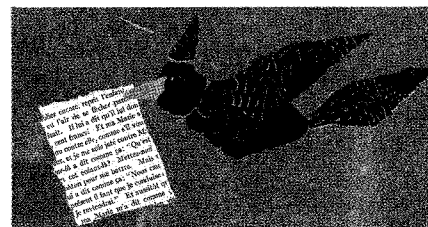
LAWRENCE BECK
Lawrence Beck approaches the ordered nature found in botanical gardens with an equally ordered Becheresque aesthetic. These large but still smaller than life prints of variegated waffle plants, Jutta's botterboom, *Anthurium warocqueanum*, and burning red Inferno tulips are a bit like dioramas trapped behind glass. Though the prints are technically sound and beautiful, they stop there and leave the rest of your senses longing for a trip to the New York Botanical Garden. Through March 23. (Sonnabend, 536 W. 22nd St. 627-1018.)

FISCHLI AND WEISS
In "Visible World," the Swiss team of Peter Fischli and David Weiss returns with another vibrant installation mixing beauty and presumably tongue-in-cheek cliché. The droll, well-travelled duo has placed more than three thousand shots on a ninety-foot-long custom light box. The viewer gets the slide show from hell—an encyclopedic collection of photos from around the world, hitting famous monuments from the Eiffel Tower to the Golden Gate Bridge to Angkor Wat. The disarmingly tedious display should leave all but the art-

BOOK CURRENTS

Wing Men

Twitchers, dudes, stringers, and robin strokers—are your ears burning? The English writer and environmentalist Mark Cocker has been watching you through his binoculars and has documented your idiosyncrasies in **BIRDERS: TALES OF A TRIBE**



(forthcoming from Atlantic Monthly). He also knows almost everything there is to know about Britain's hundreds of species of birds, which evoke a complex range of emotions, from the near-erotic, mystical experience of a first sighting to the dysphoric "dip" of a birdless outing. Since his seventies boyhood on the Derbyshire moors, Cocker has hitchhiked to see a rare migrant, gotten on the Birdline (a phone service for bird information), and tuned in to a "naff" television show called "Watching."

Migratory restlessness caused twenty-six-year-old William Fiennes, convalescing at his parents' house in the English countryside, to fly to Texas. From there he travelled due north, keeping up with the flocks of snow geese heading for their summer breeding grounds in the Canadian Arctic. **THE SNOW GEESE: A STORY OF HOME** (forthcoming from Random House) tells of the birds' amazing internal clocks, which govern their cycle of fattening, departure, breeding, and molt.

Wilder still than Fiennes's journey is the chase Tahir Shah conducts for the Peruvian Birdmen. In **TRAIL OF FEATHERS** (Arcade) Shah says he first learned of the mythical flying Incas at a secret shrunken-head auction in London. Where else? Journeying deep into the Amazonian jungle on a riverboat reminiscent of the African Queen—complete with a Vietnam vet for a guide—he searches for the Birdmen's reportedly cannibalistic, devil-worshipping descendants. But it's not until a shaman entices him with a cupful of a local hallucinogenic brew that Shah finds out what it really feels like to fly.

—Dana Goodyear

ELIZA GRAY

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ists' closest relatives dropping out before the end. Through April 20. (Matthew Marks, 523 W. 24th St. 243-0200.)

NAOMI FISHER

The Miami-based artist Naomi Fisher offers a set of Araki-like images of female figures trapped in tropical foliage and a group of smaller drawings that are based on the photographs. The camouflaged figures smile, fret, and roll their eyes in poses of ecstasy, madness, power, and surrender. Made at night and illuminated by a flash, the pictures snap with brilliant floral colors and have the graphic chaos of a silk Pucci scarf. Through March 23. (Lombard-Freid, 531 W. 26th St. 967-8040.)

INTERNATIONAL CENTER OF PHOTOGRAPHY
1133 Sixth Ave., at 43rd St. 857-0000—"Another Vietnam: Pictures of the War from the Other Side" looks at Southeast Asia in the sixties and early sev-

"WOMEN BY WOMEN"

Cook, 1063 Madison Ave., at 80th St. 737-3550. Through March 30.

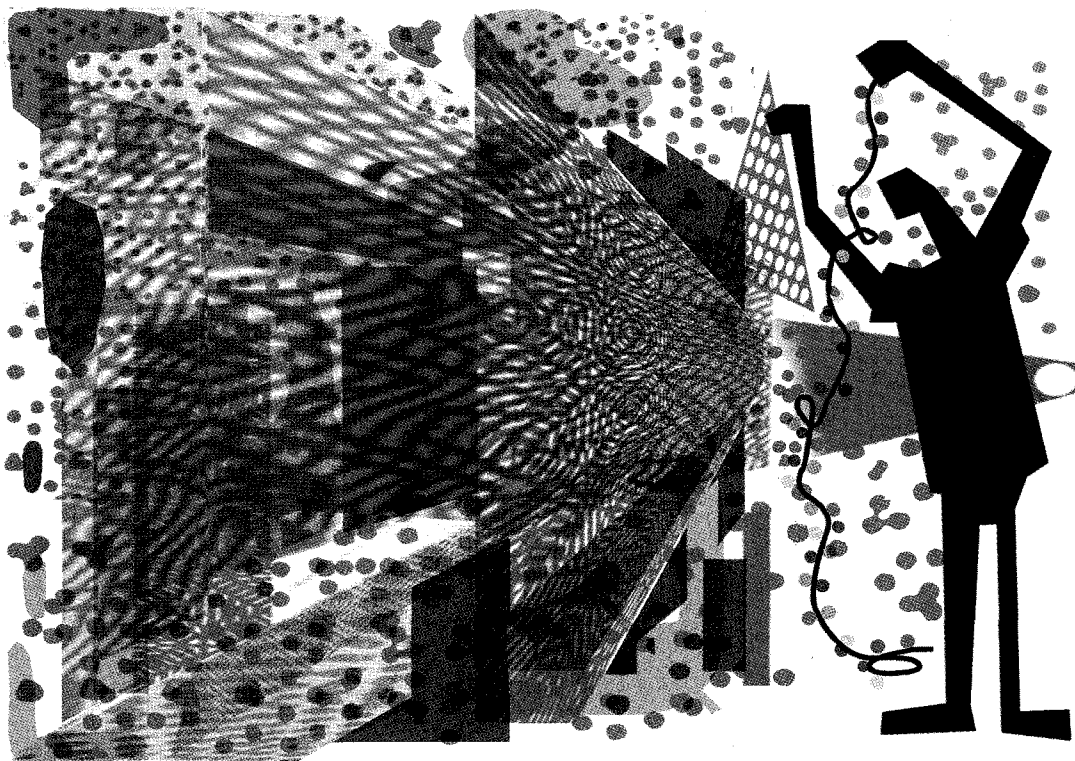
See the museum listings for photography exhibitions at the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the Museum of Modern Art.

AUCTIONS AND ANTIQUES

SOTHEBY'S

March 13 at 10:15 A.M.: "American Paintings," including works by such artists as Norman Rockwell, Jane Peterson, and Charles Burchfield ("Old Meetinghouse and Locust Trees," a watercolor estimated to bring up to seventy thousand dollars). ♦ March 19

March 16 at 8.) ♦ A return of Elijah Moshinsky's production of Verdi's "Luisa Miller" (which debuted in the fall). With Barbara Frittoli, Graves, Neil Shicoff, Phillip Ens, Roberto Frontali, and Hao Jiang Tian; James Levine conducts. (March 14 and March 18 at 8.) ♦ The final two performances of Andrei Konchalovsky's production of Prokofiev's "War and Peace," with Anna Netrebko, Ekaterina Semenchuk, Larissa Shevchenko, Dmitri Hvorostovsky, Gegam Grigorian, Samuel Ramey, and Vassily Gerello; Gianandrea Noseda. (March 15 and March 19 at 7:30.) ♦ A return of John Dexter's 1981 triple bill of modern French music theatre, designed by David Hockney, and conducted by James Levine. Satie's surrealist ballet "Parade," from 1917 (choreographed by Gray Veredon and featuring Damien Woetzel and Christine McMillan), is followed by two operas that it influenced, Poulenc's "Les Ma-



Gary Panter's light show, at Pierogi, in Williamsburg, Brooklyn.

enties from the eyes of Vietcong soldiers, reporters, and state-sanctioned photographers. Through March 17. ♦ The photographs in "Hidden Truths: Bloody Sunday 1972" bear witness to the events of January 30, 1972, when the British Army killed thirteen Republican protesters and bystanders in Derry, Northern Ireland. Through March 17. ♦ "The First Snapshots," an exhibition of candid shots by amateur photographers in the eighteen-hundreds with the earliest Kodak cameras. Through March 17. (Open Tuesdays through Thursdays, 10-5; Fridays, 10-8; Saturdays and Sundays, 10-6.)

Short List

WILLIAM EGGLESTON

Yancey Richardson, 535 W. 22nd St. 646-230-9610. Through March 16.

MICHAEL FLOMEN

Ricco/Maresca, 529 W. 20th St. 627-4819. Through March 23.

MARGI GEERLINKS

Stux, 529 W. 20th St. 352-1600. Through March 16.

DANA HOEY

Petzel, 535 W. 22nd St. 680-9467. Through March 23.

"THE LIMELIGHT YEARS:

PHOTOGRAPHS 1954-61"

Morthland, 511 W. 25th St. 242-7767. Through April 13.

at 2: A sale of Chinese archaic and gilt bronzes from the collection of Robert Hatfield Ellsworth. (York Ave. at 72nd St. 606-7000.)

CHRISTIE'S

March 19 at 10 A.M.: An auction of fine jewelry. (20 Rockefeller Plaza, at 49th St. 636-2000.)

ANTIQUORUM

March 13 at 11 A.M. and 2: "Collector's Pocket Watches, Wristwatches, and Clocks." The highlight of the sale is an extremely fine platinum wristwatch made by Patek Philippe in 1993 (one of the most complex the firm has produced), estimated to sell for approximately a quarter of a million dollars. (Grand Havana Room, 666 Fifth Ave. 750-1103.)

SWANN

March 14 at 10:30 A.M.: "The Literature of Bookbinding and Papermaking," including a numbered copy of Dard Hunter's "Papermaking by Hand in America" (from 1950) and a 1761 first edition of "L'Art de Faire le Papier," by Joseph-Jérôme le François de Lalande. (104 E. 25th St. 254-4710.)

CLASSICAL MUSIC OPERA

METROPOLITAN OPERA

"Rigoletto," with Ruth Ann Swenson, Denyce Graves, Marcelo Álvarez, Juan Pons, and Robert Lloyd; Marco Guidarini conducts. (March 13 and

March 16 at 8.) ♦ A return of Elijah Moshinsky's production of Verdi's "Luisa Miller" (which debuted in the fall). With Barbara Frittoli, Graves, Neil Shicoff, Phillip Ens, Roberto Frontali, and Hao Jiang Tian; James Levine conducts. (March 14 and March 18 at 8.) ♦ The final two performances of Andrei Konchalovsky's production of Prokofiev's "War and Peace," with Anna Netrebko, Ekaterina Semenchuk, Larissa Shevchenko, Dmitri Hvorostovsky, Gegam Grigorian, Samuel Ramey, and Vassily Gerello; Gianandrea Noseda. (March 15 and March 19 at 7:30.) ♦ A return of John Dexter's 1981 triple bill of modern French music theatre, designed by David Hockney, and conducted by James Levine. Satie's surrealist ballet "Parade," from 1917 (choreographed by Gray Veredon and featuring Damien Woetzel and Christine McMillan), is followed by two operas that it influenced, Poulenc's "Les Ma-

NEW YORK CITY OPERA

Thor Steingraber's new production of "Don Giovanni" features some notable vocal firsts. Three superb young singers—Alexandrina Pendatchanska (as Donna Anna), Peter Coleman-Wright (in the title role), and Nathan Berg (as Leporello) make their first City Opera appearances, while Amy Burton, a longtime favorite of the company in lyric and soubrette roles, sings her first Donna Elvira. Also with Mariateresa Magisano, Raul Hernandez, Kevin Burdette, and Daniel Borowski; George Manahan conducts. (March 13 at 7:30 and March 15 at 8.) ♦ John DeMain, who conducted the acclaimed 1976 premiere of the complete original version of George Gershwin's "Porgy and Bess," comes to City Opera to lead a revival of the company's 2000 production. With Alvy Powell and Marquita Lister in the title roles. (March 14 at 7:30 and March 16 at 8.) ♦ With Leonard Rowe and

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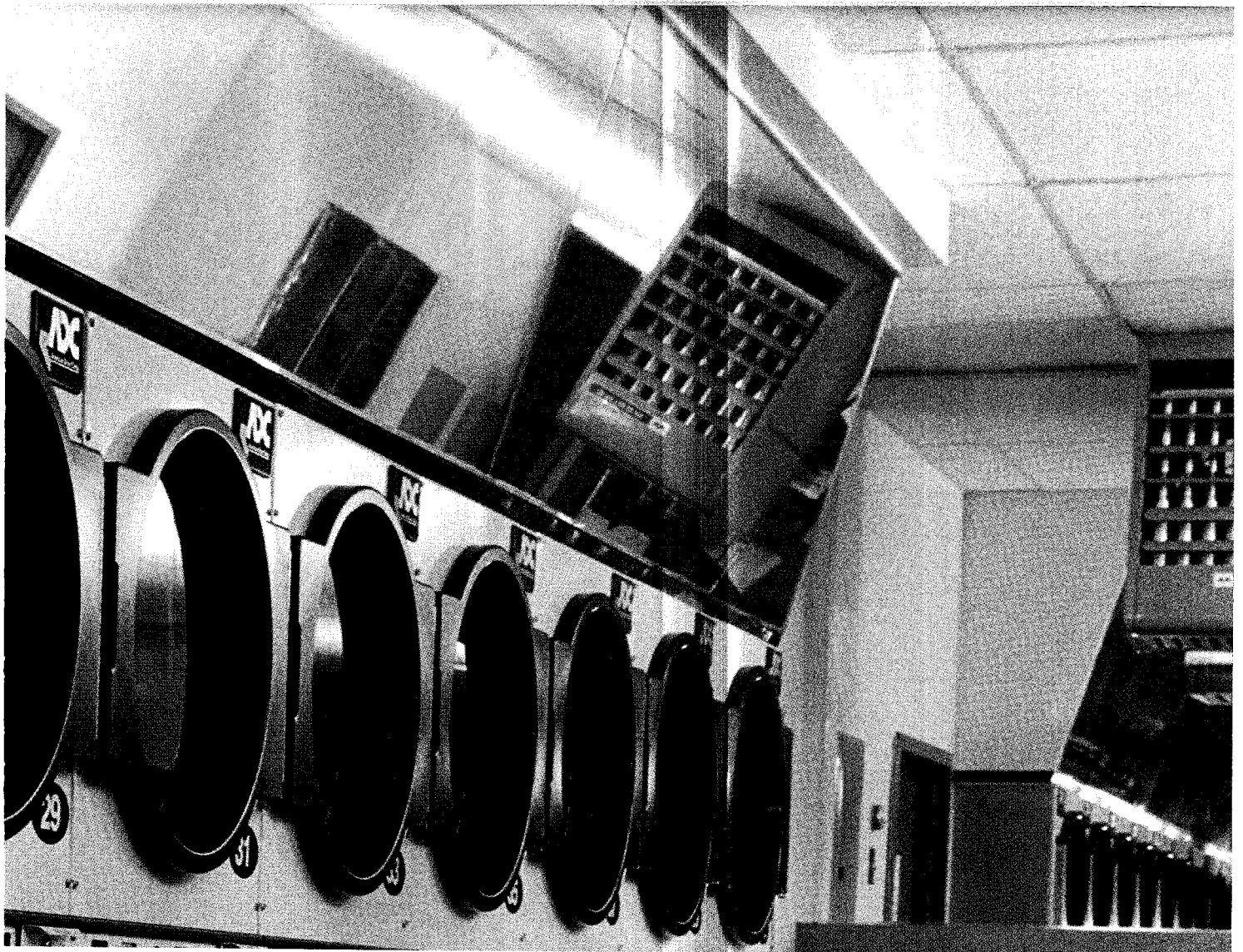


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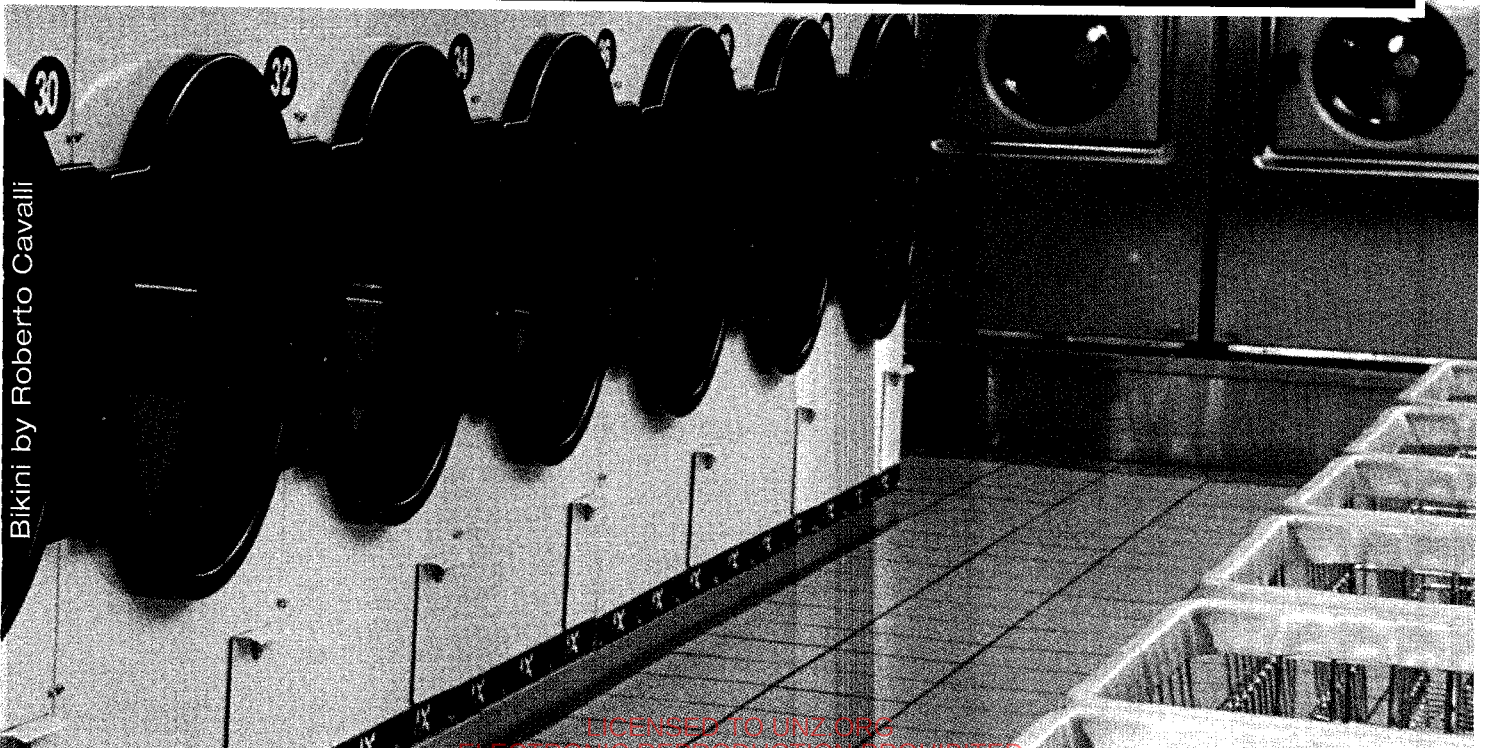


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Marsha Thompson replacing Powell and Lister; Richard Bado conducts. (March 16 at 1:30.) ♦ "Carmen," with Paula Rasmussen, Elena Kolganova, William Joyner, and Brian Davis; Manahan. (March 17 at 1:30 and March 19 at 7:30.) (New York State Theatre. 307-4100.)

PURCELL'S "KING ARTHUR"

Before it was eclipsed by the more serious "Dido and Aeneas," this "semi-opera"—a royal pageant play with extensive musical scenes—was the most often revived of Purcell's dramatic works. Bernard Labadie conducts the chorus and Baroque orchestra of the New York Collegium in a rare performance of the work, with John Dryden's verses presented in a modern adaptation by Lawrence Rosenwald and narrated by Janet Bookspan. (Ethical Culture Society Concert Hall, 2 W. 64th St. 717-9246. March 15 at 8.)

ORCHESTRAS AND CHORUSES

NEW YORK PHILHARMONIC

Colin Davis, the Philharmonic's principal guest conductor, leads a program of Schubert (the Symphony No. 5), Haydn, and Mozart (the Sinfonia Concertante, with the violinist Sheryl Staples and the violist Cynthia Phelps). (Avery Fisher Hall. 721-6500. March 14-16 at 8.)

I MUSICI

Back in the nineteen-sixties and seventies—when the authentic-performance movement was still the pastime of crackpot academics—the copious recordings of this sleek little string orchestra from Rome (which has always played without a conductor) gave thousands their first exposure to the treasures of the Italian Baroque. Now fifty years old, I Musici play an all-Vivaldi program (including "The Four Seasons") at Alice Tully Hall. (721-6500. March 16 at 8.)

BROOKLYN PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA

Robert Spano conducts a chamber version of Arthur Honegger's oratorio "King David," with the assistance of the New York Virtuoso Singers; the soloists include the mezzo-soprano Mary Nessinger. (Brooklyn Academy of Music, 30 Lafayette Ave. 718-622-5838. March 15-16 at 8.)

VIENNA PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA

Bernard Haitink conducts the legendary ensemble in three concerts at Carnegie Hall. March 15 at 3: Perennial works by Brahms (the "Haydn Variations") and Strauss ("Don Quixote") surround a performance of Haydn's once common Symphony No. 101 (the "Clock"), the acme of Viennese charm. ♦ March 16 at 8: Mozart's "Haffner" Symphony, Berg's Three Pieces for Orchestra, and Schubert's Symphony No. 9. ♦ March 17 at 2: The orchestra concludes its residency with Bruckner's Symphony No. 8. (247-7800.) ♦ In a tribute to the victims of the World Trade Center tragedy, Haitink and the V.P.O. perform a free concert at St. Patrick's Cathedral, including music by Bruckner, Haydn (the "Seven Last Words"), and Mozart ("Ave verum corpus," with the cathedral choir and the Amor Artis Chamber Choir). (Fifth Ave. at 50th St. March 17 at 8. Patrons will be seated on a first-come, first-served basis, beginning at 7:30.)

TAVENER'S "LAMENTATIONS AND PRAISES"

Chanticleer, San Francisco's extraordinary all-male chamber chorus, Boston's venerable Handel & Haydn Society, and the Metropolitan Museum of Art have teamed up to commission this new work by John Tavener, a seventy-minute, semi-staged liturgical drama based, as always with this composer, in the spirituality, texts, and musical styles of the Orthodox Church. For years, opinions on Tavener have been sharply varied—to some he is a seer, to others an opportunist who writes music by the yard. But the calibre of the performance—the New York premiere, in the Temple of Dendur—is unlikely to disappoint his fans. (Fifth Ave. at 83rd St. 570-3949. March 16 at 8.)

RUSSIAN CHAMBER CHORUS OF NEW YORK

Nikolai Kachanov conducts the world premiere of "Easter," a two-part choral cycle by the late Russian-American composer Alexei Haieff (known for his association with Copland and Stravinsky), in

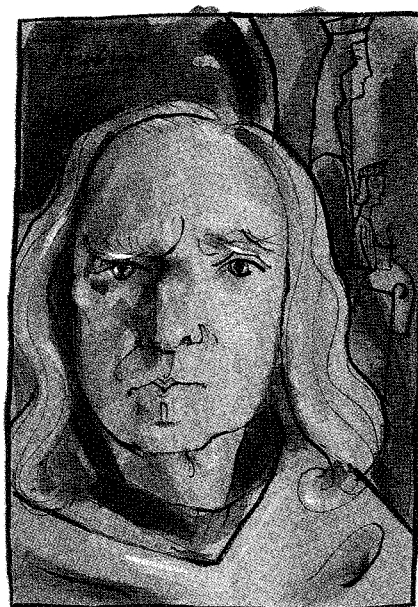
addition to works by Tchaikovsky and Gretchianoff. (St. Peter's Church, Lexington Ave. at 54th St. 928-1402. March 15 at 8.)

THE TALLIS SCHOLARS

Of all the choral masterpieces of the English Renaissance, one reigns above all—Thomas Tallis's "Spem in alium," a motet for forty separate vocal parts. Miller Theatre concludes its festival of English church music from the reign of Mary I with a rare performance of this and other works, given by the renowned British choral ensemble. (Riverside Church, Riverside Dr. at 120th St. 854-7799. March 17 at 4.)

CHOIR OF ST. THOMAS CHURCH

Gerre Hancock conducts the choir in a Lenten performance of Bach's St. Matthew Passion (with Concert Royal). (Fifth Ave. at 53rd St. 664-9360. March 19 at 7:30.)



John Tavener's "Lamentations and Praises" receives its New York premiere at the Metropolitan Museum of Art on March 16.

PHILADELPHIA ORCHESTRA

For decades HK Gruber has tried to shake Old Vienna out of its fatalistic, post-Schoenbergian stupor by writing music that, against all good sense, combines subtle twelve-tone architecture with outrageous and nostalgic references to pop and jazz. "Frankenstein!!"—a raucous and sinister "pan-demonium" for singing narrator and an orchestra full of toy instruments—had its world premiere in 1978, conducted by a very young Simon Rattle (with the composer himself as *chansonnier*), and went on to be performed around the world. Gruber again takes up the role in Rattle's Carnegie Hall concert with the Fabulous Philadelphians; Mahler's Symphony No. 5, which completes the program, might seem fusty by comparison. (247-7800. March 19 at 8.)

RECITALS

COSMOPOLITAN CHAMBER PLAYERS

The ensemble joins one of New York's more fluent composer-pianists, Lowell Liebermann, for a program of Schubert (the Piano Trio No. 1 in B-Flat Major) and Liebermann himself (three works, including the New York premiere of the ardently Neo-Romantic Concerto for Violin, Piano, and String Quartet). (Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St. 501-3330. March 13 at 8.)

MARILYN NONKEN PLAYS PIERRE BOULEZ

The pianist performs the complete piano music—a daunting task—of the reigning French modernist. (Great Hall, Cooper Union, Third Ave. at 7th St. 279-4200. March 14 at 7:30.)

ENSEMBLE SOSPELO: "SOUND ON FILM"

Four new short films with music have their premières, including collaborations between Werner Herzog and John Tavener, Nicholas Roeg and Portishead's Adrian Utley ("Sound," featuring Claudia Schiffer), Hal Hartley and Louis Andriessen ("The New Math(s)"), and Karlheinz Stockhausen and the Brothers Quay. (Miller Theatre, Broadway at 116th St. 854-7799. March 14-15 at 8.)

EMERSON STRING QUARTET

For all the intensity of their playing, the Emerson's members have never seemed very interested in emotional self-expression; they are often at their best when they take up the greatest challenges, allowing their technical virtuosity and dramatic style of presentation to come to the fore. Performing all of Bartók's six quartets on one program may not be unheard of, but it is rare enough to make this concert (which will have two intermissions) an extraordinary event. (Alice Tully Hall. 721-6500. March 17 at 3.)

ABOVE AND BEYOND

"YIDDISH MELODIES IN SWING"

Not the latest example of world-music fusion, "Yiddish Melodies in Swing" is the title of a long-lost radio program on WHN in New York that featured Sam Medoff and the Yiddish Swing Orchestra. The show, which aired from 1938 until 1955, survived only in memory until the musicologist Henry Sapoznik found a pile of sixteen-inch aluminum disks in a Manhattan storage room. Sapoznik eventually discovered more than five hundred hours of Yiddish radio: variety shows, man-on-the-street interviews, news programs, and early accounts of Holocaust survivors. The radio producer Dave Isay and Sound Portraits Productions have taken these treasures and shaped them into radio documentaries, narrated by some of the surviving legends of the era. This week Sapoznik and Isay present two special live versions of their show. The series, dubbed the "Yiddish Radio Project," will air on NPR in the spring. (Center for Jewish History, 15 W. 16th St. 606-8200. March 17 at 7. ♦ Symphony Space, Broadway at 95th St. 864-5400. March 18 at 8.)

READINGS

March 13 at 6: Janet Groth, the author of "Edmund Wilson: A Critic for Our Time," and the actor Joel Vig gather for a reading based on the letters of Edmund Wilson. (The General Society Library, 20 W. 44th St. 921-1767.) ♦ March 13 at 7:30: The Poetry Society of America presents "Try to Praise the Mutilated World," an evening of contemporary Polish verse that takes its name from the poem by Adam Zagajewski. The readers are W. S. Merwin, Robert Pinsky, Clare Cavanagh, Mary Karr, Zagajewski, and other writers. Alice Quinn, the poetry editor at this magazine, is the host. (Great Hall, Cooper Union, Third Ave. at 7th St. For more information, call 254-9628.) ♦ March 19 at 7: Brenda Hillman, Yusef Komunyakaa, and Saskia Hamilton read from their poetry. (New School, 66 W. 12th St. For more information, call 254-9628.) ♦ March 19 at 8: Dorothy Allison, Arthur Miller, Studs Terkel, William Kennedy, and other writers offer passages from the works of John Steinbeck. (Alice Tully Hall. 721-6500.)

TALKS

March 13 at 6:30: Carol Willis, the director of the Skyscraper Museum, moderates a discussion about the design and construction of the World Trade Center with the complex's structural engineer, Leslie E. Robertson, and builder, John L. Tishman. (New-York Historical Society, 2 W. 77th St., at Central Park W. For reservations, which are required, call 968-1961.) ♦ March 13 at 6:30: The writers Emer Martin, Colm Toibin, Maureen Dezell, and Terry Golway do their best to dispel the stereotypes and myths that circulate around St. Patrick's Day in an evening titled "Beyond the Blarney: Talking About the Irish in America." (Celeste Bartos Forum, New York Public Library, Fifth Ave. at 42nd St. 930-0855.)

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NEW YORK

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MOVIES OPENING

HARRISON'S FLOWERS

Andie MacDowell plays a wife searching for her photojournalist husband (David Strathairn), who has gone missing in Bosnia. The cast also includes Elias Koteas and Adrien Brody. Opening March 15.

ICE AGE

An animated adventure from Fox studios, in which a woolly mammoth, a sabre-toothed tiger, and a sloth try to rescue a lost human infant. Voices by Ray Romano, Denis Leary, Jack Black, and John Leguizamo. Opening March 15.

KISSING JESSICA STEIN

After a series of bad dates, a New York journalist (Jennifer Westfeldt) decides to answer a personal ad in the "Women Seeking Women" section. Westfeldt co-wrote the script with Heather Juergensen, who plays her love interest. Opening March 13.

PAULINE & PAULETTE

The Belgian actress Dora van der Groen plays an elderly, simple-minded woman whose siblings must care for her, or else lose their inheritance. In Dutch. Opening March 15.

PROMISES

Justine Shapiro, B. Z. Goldberg, and Carlos Bolado directed this documentary about Palestinian and Israeli children living in and around Jerusalem. Opening March 15.

RESIDENT EVIL

A virus infects an underground genetics lab, turning all the researchers into killer zombies; Milla Jovovich and Michelle Rodriguez command the élite military task force sent in to contain the situation. Opening March 15.

SHOWTIME

Tom Dey ("Shanghai Noon") directed this spoof of buddy-cop movies. Eddie Murphy and Robert De Niro head up a cast that includes William Shatner and Rene Russo. Opening March 15.

YELLOW ASPHALT

Three stories written and directed by Danny Vereté that dramatize modern encounters between Bedouins and Israelis. Opening March 13. (Film Forum.)

Y TU MAMÁ TAMBIÉN

Reviewed this week in *The Current Cinema*. Opening March 15.

FILM NOTES

AN ACTOR'S REVENGE

In 1963, the Japanese star Kazuo Hasegawa made his three-hundredth movie, playing the same double role he did in 1935: a Kabuki female impersonator and a self-styled Robin Hood. On a stage that looks like a glittering flat ribbon—it outscopes CinemaScope—Hasegawa's character, Yukinojo, plots his revenge on the men who drove his father to suicide. Yukinojo's two enemies, a merchant and a lord (and former magistrate), have been hoarding rice during a famine and driving good-hearted fellows to banditry. When they show up for Yukinojo's opening night in Edo, with the lord's daughter in tow, she falls for the exotic charms of the actor's masculine-feminine ambiguity. Throughout, the director, Kon Ichikawa, succeeds in making all the world a stage, mixing theatrical and cinematic devices with earthquake intensity. Colors slice into the dark backgrounds of the nocturnal scenes like lights flashed at night through the floor of a glass-bottomed boat. In Japanese.—*Michael Sragow* (Museum of Modern Art; March 18.)

AMÉLIE

A waifish Parisienne discovers her mission in life: to bring unexpected happiness to others, and so to herself. Such is the story of Amélie (Audrey Tautou), and the simplicity of it—not to mention its dangerous surfeit of sweetness—appears to have touched a universal nerve. (In truth, the saga of the movie's success is more telling than anything in the movie itself.) Tautou is clearly a find, although one wonders what Mathieu Kassovitz, who plays the object of her affection, made of his role; it was Kassovitz who, in 1995, yanked French cinema up to date with his baring of ethnic hostilities in "La Haine."



The Paris of this new movie lies at the other extreme, although what nags at you most is not the neighborly charm but the itchy, unsettled manner of the director, Jean-Pierre Jeunet. How far should we trust a plea for benevolence when it feels like a box of tricks? In French.—*Anthony Lane* (Reviewed in our issue of 11/5/01.) (Angelika Film Center, BAM Rose Cinemas, Chelsea Cinemas, East 86th Street Cinemas, Empire 25, First & 62nd Cinemas, Murray Hill Cinemas, and 34th Street Theatre.)

A BEAUTIFUL MIND

If you think the title stinks, try the movie. Russell Crowe plays John Nash, a real-life mathematician whose most radical work was produced in his early twenties and who shared the 1994 Nobel Prize for Economics at the age of sixty-six. In between lay years of darkness, during which Nash was assailed by paranoid schizophrenia. When it comes to the delicate matter of his delusions, this earnest movie, written by Akiva Goldsman and directed by Ron Howard, pulls a flagrant scam: whole characters and episodes are presented as urgently authentic, only to be revealed as figments of a cracked imagination. Crowe pulls out the stops, but he looks too bullish and controlled for such a pitiable victim. The movie grinds on forever until it bumps into redemption; the best reason to stay with it is Jennifer Connelly, who smolders and suffers to perfection as Nash's weary wife. Math skills not required.—*A.L.* (1/7/02) (Beekman, Chelsea Cinemas, 42nd Street E Walk, Kips Bay Theatre, Lincoln Square, Park & 86th Street Cinemas, 34th Street Theatre, and Union Square.)

CROSSROADS

Britney Spears's debut movie presents a delicate marketing problem: how do you turn a super-bland pop star into a human being without upsetting her fans? Answer: by letting Britney dance provocatively on her bed while also making her the class valedictorian and a virgin, by having her escape from her small town while making sure that she calls home at every pit stop between Georgia and Los Angeles, and so on. Will Britney become a movie star? Maybe, but, not to put too fine a point on it, there's something wrong with her face. In closeup, her eyes appear too widely spaced, her upper lip too soft, and her flesh seems coated with a lab-developed polymer that gives it the hue of a Peking duck.—*David Denby* (3/4/02) (42nd Street E Walk, Kips Bay Theatre, Lincoln Square, 34th Street Theatre, and Village Theatre VII.)

40 DAYS AND 40 NIGHTS

Matt (Josh Hartnett), a San Francisco Web designer from a Catholic family, gets dumped by his glamorous girlfriend and decides to swear off sex for Lent. Tripping and falling all over the place, his eyes brimming with panic, Hartnett throws himself into the performance physically and some of his corkscrew desperation is funny. But the director, Michael Lehmann, allows the actor to repeat himself a lot, perhaps because the screenwriter, Robert Perez, hasn't written enough for the character. Who is this guy? It's not so much sex that Matt seems eager to avoid as it is speech, and, after a while, he just seems like a dope who has committed himself to a meaningless stunt. The movie is set among allegedly hip San Francisco people in their twenties, but the sensibility is naggingly adolescent.—*D.D.* (3/11/02) (Chelsea Cinemas, Cinema 1, East 86th

Street Cinemas, Empire 25, Kips Bay Theatre, Lincoln Square, 34th Street Theatre, and Union Square.)

GOSFORD PARK

This Agatha Christie-style houseparty murder mystery, set in 1932, plants itself deep into social reality and achieves the kind of candor about class and sex that Christie would never have been capable of. The brilliant screenplay was written by Julian Fellowes. Robert Altman directs an enormous cast with lightness and speed and a masterly ability to pull the many little pieces of intrigue together into a coherent whole. Casually, the movie chronicles the end of the rigid British class system and the liberation of the working class through popular entertainment. The once-in-a-lifetime cast includes Michael Gambon, Kristin Scott Thomas, Maggie Smith, Jeremy Northam, and Charles Dance as the swells, and Helen Mirren, Eileen Atkins, Alan Bates, Clive Owen, and Emily Watson as the servants.—*D.D.* (1/14/02) (Chelsea Cinemas, East 85th Street, 42nd Street E Walk, Kips Bay Theatre, Lincoln Square, New York Twin, 34th Street Theatre, and Union Square.)

JOHN Q.

When his young son needs a heart transplant and his insurance won't cover the operation, a Chicago machinist (Denzel Washington) takes a prominent surgeon (James Woods) and a number of patients hostage, threatening to kill his captives if his son doesn't get a new ticker. This tearjerker, written by James Kearns and directed by Nick Cassavetes, is a trashy, opportunistic work that appears to have been intentionally pitched low in order to rouse an audience that the filmmakers view as politically somnolent. They may have calculated correctly: the movie is badly written, directed, and acted, yet the people in the theatre, fed up with the health-care system, seem alive to the picture and shout back at the screen.—*D.D.* (3/4/02) (Cinema 3, 84th Street Sixplex, Empire 25, Kips Bay Theatre, 19th Street East 6, Orpheum VII, 34th Street Theatre, and Village Theatre VII.)

LAST ORDERS

A gang of three Englishmen, in various states of decline, gather to mourn a fourth, an East London butcher and veteran of the Second World War. Fred Schepisi's careful movie, adapted from Graham Swift's prize-winning novel, has a tricky, deck-shuffling structure, with past and present chopping repeatedly into one another; you may warm to this layering, though you could also argue that Schepisi is trying too hard to deepen a dangerously simple tale. The issue here is a friendship that survives the dwindling of a nation; we pass from an England proudly at war to the weary confines of a pub. The pals are played by David Hemmings, Tom Courtenay, Bob Hoskins, and, filling the dead man's shoes, Michael Caine. Some of their backchat has an oddly studied air—what would the film have felt like if Schepisi had allowed them to improvise? With Helen Mirren as the non-merry widow, and the unabashed Kelly Reilly as her younger self.—*A.L.* (2/18 & 25/02) (First & 62nd Cinemas, Lincoln Plaza Cinemas, and Union Square.)

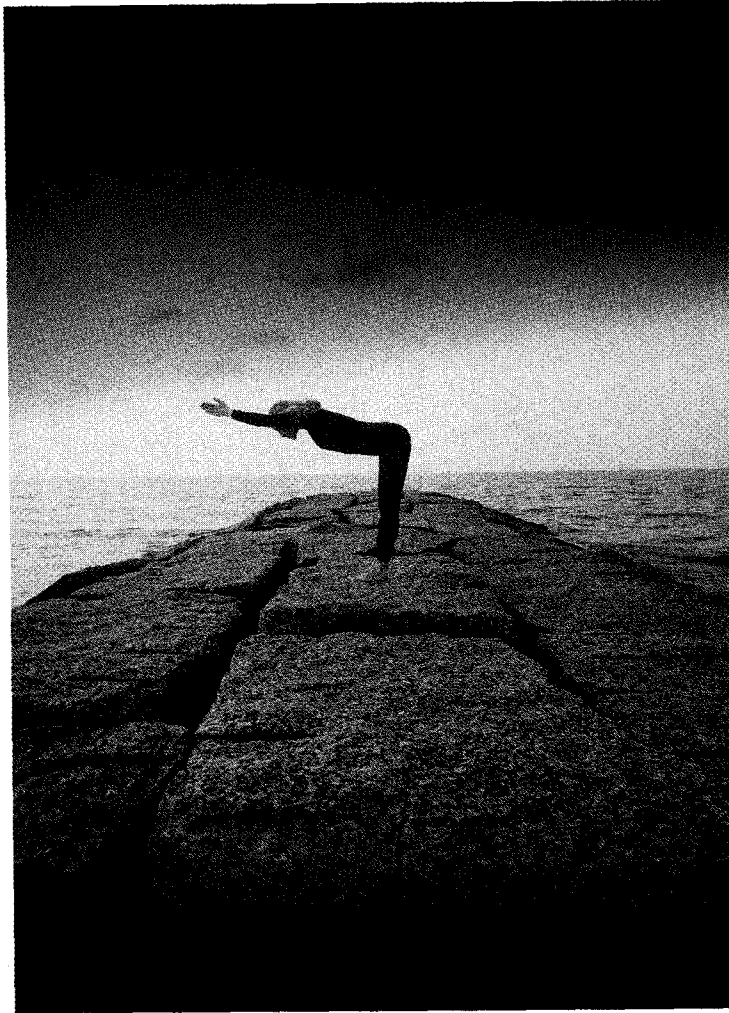
MARYAM

Set during the hostage crisis of 1979, this drama portrays the my-so-called-life of a young Jersey girl of Iranian descent (played beautifully by Mariam Parvizi). At school, Maryam faces bias from classmates; at home, she attempts to wriggle out from under her strict parents. When her Muslim cousin arrives from their homeland, the culture clash becomes more serious, and the film evokes the patriotism of the Americans and the revolutionary idealism of the Iranians. Both begin to seem misguided. Ramin Serry, the writer-director, keeps the story buoyant with frivolous touches, and he ultimately succeeds in gracefully depicting a troubled time.—*Bruce Diones* (Angelika Film Center.)

MONSOON WEDDING

Mira Nair's new picture has been hailed as a feel-good spree, but it's better than that—a barely stable compound of the wounding, the confusing, and the appealing. The action takes place in Delhi, where a pair of middle-class parents (Lillete Dubey and Naseeruddin Shah) work themselves into a froth over the nuptials of their daughter (Vasundhara Das). Her marriage is, of course, arranged; for all the racket and buzz of the film's modernity, it finds time to make the suggestion—bewildering, perhaps,

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to audiences here—that from this archaic arrangement can spring an enduring love. The groom is flying in from Houston, Texas; another relative travels from Australia, and you brace yourself for the cultural collisions. The result is a comedy, but only just. India's stressful poise between orthodoxy and innovation (listen for the clash of peacock and cell phone) leads to a devastating family fracture that is only half-healed by the celebrations at the end. In English and Hindi, sometimes within a single conversation.—*A.L.* (2/18 & 25/02) (BAM Rose Cinemas, Paris, and Sunshine Cinema.)

QUEEN OF THE DAMNED

The late, great R. & B. singer Aaliyah makes her appearance about halfway through this bloodless vampire chronicle based on Anne Rice's wacky novel. Stuart Townsend plays Lestat, the night stalker who awakens the Queen from her slumber with garish rock tunes. The whole film is a swishy, rococo howl—too humorless to be camp (although most of the cast puts on a hysterical Transylvanian accent) and dull beyond reason.—*B.D.* (East 86th Street Cinemas, Empire 25, Kips Bay Theatre, Lincoln Square, and Union Square.)

SCRATCH

It started simply enough: in 1975, Theodore Livingston (a.k.a. GrandWizzard Theodore) was playing music in his Bronx River Houses apartment when his mom yelled at him to turn it down; he grabbed the record with his hand and heard a scratchy noise that sounded kind of cool. Starting from this mythic zero hour, Doug Pray's enthusiastic homage to d.j.s follows the evolution of scratching from an accident to an art form. In its current state, scratching requires an absurd dexterity and a love for mind-melting sonic distortions. One practitioner, Mix Master Mike, tells of a night when he was so freaked out by the sounds emanating from his turntables that he believed he was communicating with intergalactic beings. His story, along with those of other influential turntablists, makes for a rough-sketch history of a style that's now being co-opted by footwear and soft-drink ads.—*Michael Agger* (Sunshine Cinema.)

of familiar terrain. In its sharp-etched way, this is no less comic than Moretti's other work, and, for all its sophistication, the comedy is of the primitive kind—that of continuing to live (to jog, to cook, to go to school) when the reason to live has fallen from your hands. In Italian.—*A.L.* (2/4/02) (Lincoln Plaza Cinemas and Village East Cinemas.)

STORYTELLING

Another disturbance of the peace from the writer-director Todd Solondz, who made "Welcome to the Dollhouse" and "Happiness." This time, we get a movie split in half, the first part of which concerns a creative-writing student (Selma Blair), thin and white, who dumps her disabled boyfriend and, for good measure, sleeps with her black professor. In the second half, we trace the exploits of a documentary

locations for this 1957 film were invaded by thousands of teen-agers, who broke through police barricades to get to their idol. But these throngs ignored the completed picture, in which Curtis grew up into an actor and gave what will probably be remembered as the best performance of his career. Even the presence of that other box-office guarantor, Burt Lancaster, did not lift the picture from the red ink. This is understandable, because the movie is a slice of perversity—a study of dollar and power worship, with Lancaster as a Broadway gossip columnist and Curtis as an ingratiating, blackmailing press agent. Clifford Odets never came through more pungently as a screenwriter; his distinctively idiomatic dialogue generally seems like bad poetry when it's spoken from the screen, but here it's harshly expressive



Milla Jovovich and Michelle Rodriguez in "Resident Evil."

THE SON'S ROOM

The Italian director Nanni Moretti has delved into his darkest material to date and come up with his best film; even here, amazing to report, his customary lightness of touch has not deserted him. Moretti himself stars as a psychiatrist, Giovanni, who is married to the calm and adoring Paola (Laura Morante). They have two children (Jasmine Trinca and Giuseppe Sanfelice), one of whom dies, taking with him the dream of a happy family. Moretti's pacing is hard to fault, as he follows the hairline cracks that widen into gulfs and leave the household looking isolated and loveless. As a case study, the movie adds little to the archives of grief, and rightly so; Moretti is simply drawing up his own distinctively colored map

filmmaker (Paul Giamatti) who wants to unearth what the youth of today are doing with themselves in high school. The answer is, more or less, nothing, although we do come across one slacker who would like to be on TV. In short, Solondz presents two tales meant to wrinkle out the cultural encounters that embarrass us the most, and then twists the knife and leaves us squirming harder than before. It's clever enough, and you could gash yourself on some of the lines, but, when a director is as resolutely ungenerous as Solondz, the end can only come as a relief.—*A.L.* (2/4/02) (Angelika Film Center.)

SWEET SMELL OF SUCCESS

For several years, Tony Curtis had been a virtual guarantor of box-office success, and the New York

and taut. The director, Alexander Mackendrick, has a crisp film-noir style: the production is shaped by a zest for the corrupt milieu, the pulsating big-city life (what used to be called "the symphony of a city")—the streets, the night clubs, the cynical types, the noise and desperation.—*Pauline Kael* (Film Forum; March 15-19.)

THE TIME MACHINE

In the future, we'll all be listening to Enya. The dystopic novel by H. G. Wells about a Victorian inventor who dabbles in time travel gets a New Age makeover courtesy of his great-grandson, the director Simon Wells. As Alexander Hartdegen, Guy Pearce does an admirable job of keeping a straight face, and his rides in the time machine are astonishing special effects displays. One set piece—a triple-time morphing of nineteenth-century Manhattan into our skyscraper era—could be shown at the Hayden Planetarium. Even the improbable leaps of logic and the bland, international English dialogue don't really dampen the fun. It's when Pearce arrives in the future and discovers the Eloi (sort of like the Anasazi, except they're really into bamboo) that the race and class issues get an awkward, cringe-inducing treatment. Still, it's worth sticking around just to see Jeremy Irons as the Uber-Morlock.—*M.A.* (Cinema 3, 84th Street Sixplex, Empire 25, Kips Bay Theatre, 19th Street East 6, Olympia I and II, Orpheum VII, 34th Street Theatre, and Village Theatre VII.)

WE WERE SOLDIERS

A bloody piece of hero worship devoted to an ideal commander—Lieutenant Colonel Harold Moore (Mel Gibson)—and to fighting and dying in the right way. The training is bruising, the leadership inspired, the wives as supportive as deeply rooted oaks. In 1965, early in the war in Vietnam, Moore leads units of the Army's Seventh Cavalry against a much larger North Vietnamese force. Mel Gibson is leathery but quick and alert, his eyes darting this way and that. When he runs around from one part of the perimeter to another, his M-16 blazing, the movie is exciting in a rudimentary, gung-ho way. The writer-director Randall Wallace stages much of the combat at very close range, with masses of North Vietnamese in-

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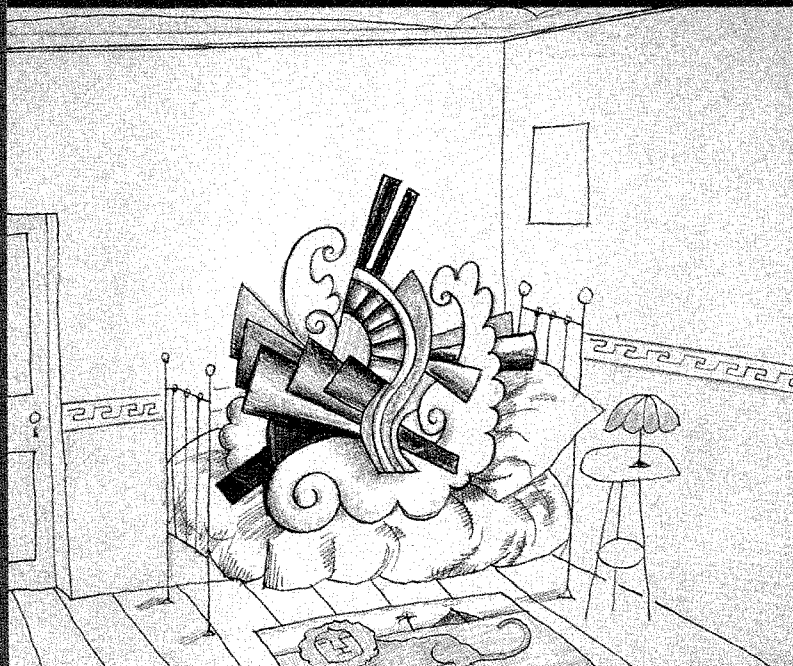
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fantry hurling themselves against American riflemen. Recapitulating the many pictures made in the forties and fifties which portrayed the Americans as good and simple people fighting for a just cause, Wallace and Gibson have taken Vietnam out of history—essentially, they have assimilated it into the Second World War.—*D.D.* (3/11/02) (84th Street Sixplex, 42nd Street E Walk, Kips Bay Theatre, New York Twin, 19th Street East 6, Olympia I and II, Orpheum VII, 34th Street Theatre, Village Theatre VII, and Ziegfeld.)

THE YOUNG GIRLS OF ROCHEFORT

Jacques Demy's 1968 musical follow-up to "The Umbrellas of Cherbourg" centers on twin sisters (Catherine Deneuve and Françoise Dorléac) and the men who glide through their mother's café. Demy tries to combine the knock-em-dead jubilation of song-and-dance extravaganzas like "On the Town" with casual nuanced passages that reveal the melodic (and discordant) textures of everyday life. But this time out, the director's blend is less art than Cuisinart. And as good as it is to see Gene Kelly as an American in Rochefort his presence underlines the jarring hybrid nature of the movie as a whole. Michel Legrand wrote the appealingly headlong score. With Danielle Darrieux (as the twins' mom), George Chakiris, and Michel Piccoli. In French.—*M.S.* (Florence Gould Hall; March 19.)

ALSO PLAYING

IN THE BEDROOM (11/26/01)

Angelika Film Center, Chelsea Cinemas, Empire 25, First & 62nd Cinemas, Kips Bay Theatre, Lincoln Plaza Cinemas, Metro Twin, and 34th Street Theatre.

IRIS

Empire 25, Cinema 2, Lincoln Square, and Union Square.

LANTANA

Lincoln Plaza Cinemas and Quad Cinema.

THE LORD OF THE RINGS: THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE RING (12/24 & 31/01)

Chelsea Cinemas, East 86th Street Cinemas, 42nd Street E Walk, Kips Bay Theatre, Lincoln Square, and Union Square.

MULHOLLAND DRIVE (10/15/01)

Cinema Village and Empire 25.

THEATRE ADDRESSES

Unless noted, call 777-FILM for show times.

Angelika Film Center, 18 W. Houston St.

Astor Plaza, 44th St. at Broadway.

BAM Rose Cinemas, 30 Lafayette Ave., Brooklyn.

Beekman, Second Ave. at 66th St.

Chelsea Cinemas, 260 W. 23rd St.

Chelsea West, 333 W. 23rd St.

Cinemas 1, 2, and 3, Third Ave. at 60th St.

Cinema Village, 22 E. 12th St. (924-3363).

East 85th Street, First Ave. at 85th St.

East 86th Street Cinemas, Third Ave. at 86th St.

84th Street Sixplex, Broadway at 84th St.

Empire 25, on 42nd St. near Eighth Ave. (398-3939).

59th Street East Cinema, 239 E. 59th St.

Film Forum, W. Houston St. west of Sixth Ave. (727-8110).

First & 62nd Cinemas, 400 E. 62nd St.

42nd Street E Walk, 42nd St. near Eighth Ave.

Kips Bay Theatre, Second Ave. at 32nd St.

Lincoln Plaza Cinemas, Broadway at 63rd St.

Lincoln Square, Broadway at 68th St.

Metro Twin, Broadway at 99th St.

Murray Hill Cinemas, 160 E. 34th St.

New York Twin, Second Ave. at 67th St.

19th Street East 6, Broadway at 19th St.

Olympia I and II, Broadway at 107th St.

Orpheum VII, Third Ave. at 86th St.

Paris, 4 W. 58th St. (688-3800).

Park & 86th Street Cinemas, 125 E. 86th St.

Pioneer, 155 E. 3rd St. (254-3300).

Quad Cinema, 34 W. 13th St.

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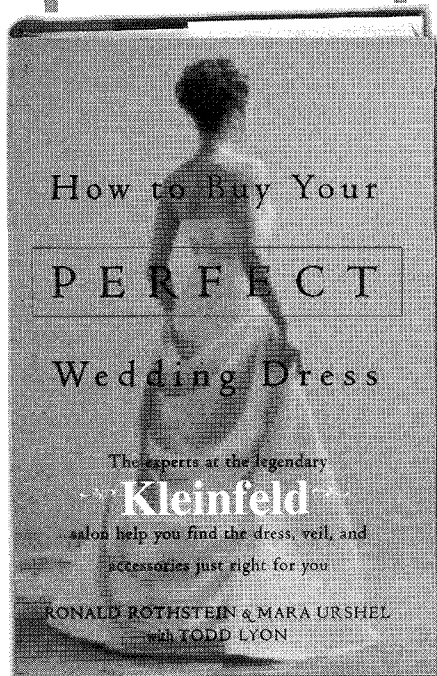
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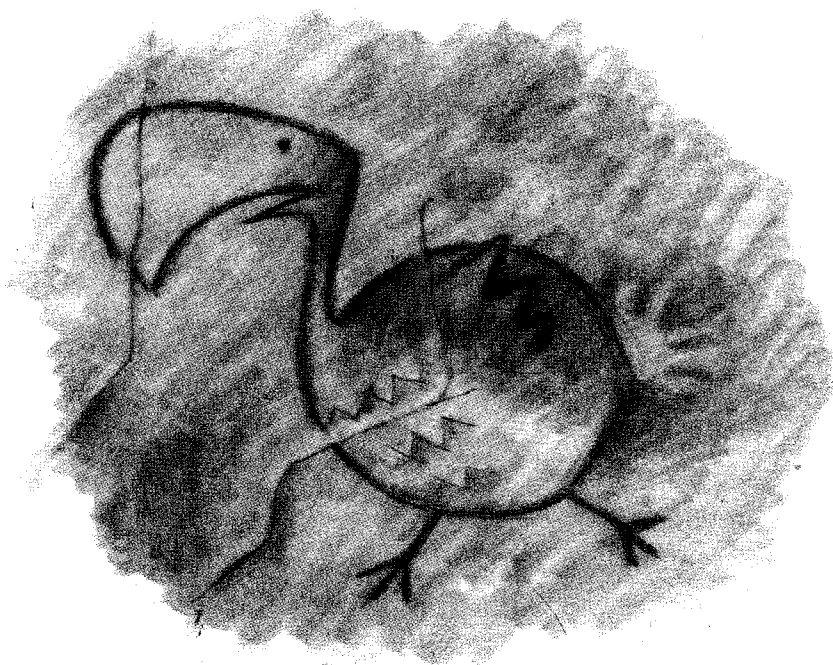
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The Screening Room, 54 Varick St. (334-2100).
72nd Street East, Third Ave. at 71st St.
64th and 2nd, Second Ave. at 64th St.
62nd & Broadway, 62 W. 62nd St.
State, Broadway at 45th St.
Sunshine Cinema, 139-143 E. Houston St.
Sutton 1 and 2, Third Ave. at 57th St.
34th Street Theatre, 312 W. 34th St.
Union Square, Broadway at 13th St.
Village East Cinemas, Second Ave. at 12th St.
Village Theatre VII, Third Ave. at 11th St.
Walter Reade Theatre, Lincoln Center
(875-5600).
Ziegfeld, 141 W. 54th St.

REVIVALS, CLASSICS, ETC.

Titles with a dagger are reviewed above.

AMERICAN MUSEUM OF THE MOVING IMAGE
35th Ave. at 36th St., Astoria (718-784-0077)—
Through March 31: "New York, New York," films
selected by the New York Film Critics Circle.
March 16 at 2: "Bye Bye Braverman" (1968, Sid-
ney Lumet). ♦ March 16 at 4:30: "The Plot Against
Harry" (1969/1989, Michael Roemer). ♦ March 17
at 2: "Taking Off" (1971, Milos Forman). ♦ March
17 at 4: "I Like It Like That" (1994, Darnell Mar-
tin). ♦ Repertory night. March 16-17 at 6:30:
"Aguirre, the Wrath of God" (1972, Werner Her-
zog; in German).



Opening March 15, "Ice Age," with characters designed by the artist Peter de Sève, who
drew the dodo bird above as a whimsical cave painting for the movie.

ANTHOLOGY FILM ARCHIVES
32 Second Ave., at 2nd St. (505-5110)—March
13-18: "Urban Legends: The Films of James Fo-
topoulos," experimental works from the Chi-
cago filmmaker.

BAM ROSE CINEMAS
30 Lafayette Ave., Brooklyn (718-777-3456)—
The films of Jean-Luc Godard and Anna Karina.
March 14 at 7: "A Woman Is a Woman" (1961; in
French). ♦ March 18-19 at 4:30, 6:50, and 9:10:
"The Little Soldier" (1961; in French). ♦ Silent films
from the Pordenone festival. March 15 at 7:30:
"Treasures from a Chest: Retour de Flamme (1897-
1927)," early films by Lumière, Gaumont, and oth-
ers which were recently discovered. ♦ March 16 at
5: "Maciste in Hell" (1926, Guido Brignone) and
"Pass the Gravy" (1928, Fred Guiol and Leo Mc-
Carey). ♦ March 16 at 8:30: "From Morning to
Midnight" (1920, Karl Heinz Martin). ♦ March

17 at 5: "Lonesome" (1928) and "The Cook"
(1918, Fatty Arbuckle). ♦ March 17 at 8:30: "Blind
Justice" (1915, Benjamin Christensen).

FILM FORUM

W. Houston St. west of Sixth Ave. (727-8110)—
March 13-19 at 1, 2:50, 4:40, 6:30, 8:20, and
10:10: "Pépé Le Moko" (1937, Julien Duvivier; in
French). ♦ Starting March 15 at 1:30, 3:30, 5:40,
7:30, and 9:30: "Sweet Smell of Success" (†).

FLORENCE GOULD HALL

55 E. 59th St. (355-6160)—Films that portray *la
vie d'artiste*. March 19 at 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, and 9:
"The Young Girls of Rochefort" (†).

GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM

Fifth Ave. at 89th St. (423-3500)—Recent cinema
from Mexico. All films are in Spanish. March 15 at
7: "Streeters" (2001, Gerardo Tort). ♦ March 16 at
3: "Written in the Body of the Night" (2000, Jaime
Humberto Hermosillo). ♦ March 16 at 7: "The
Faces of the Moon" (2001, Guita Schyfter).

MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

Roy and Niuta Titus Theatres, 11 W. 53rd St.
(708-9480)—Through March 16: "Shin Sang-Ok:
Korean Filmmaker." March 14 at 2:30 and March
16 at 3:15: "Vanished" (1994). ♦ March 15 at 2:30
and March 16 at 1: "Mayumi Virgin Terrorist"
(1990). ♦ March 16 at 5:30: "A Flower in Hell"
(1958). ♦ Through April 5: "Kon Ichikawa: A
Reprise." All films are in Japanese. March 18 at 2:
"Kagi" (1959). ♦ March 18 at 4: "Enjo" (1958). ♦
March 18 at 6: "An Actor's Revenge" (†). ♦ March
19 at 2: "Pu-san" (1953). ♦ March 19 at 4: "A Bil-
lionaire" (1954). ♦ March 19 at 6: "A Full-Up

Train" (1957). ♦ Through March 17: "The First
Decade: Video from the EAI Archives," selected
video art from the collection of Electronic Arts In-
termix. See www.moma.org for complete details.

WALTER READE THEATRE

Lincoln Center (875-5600)—Through March 17:
"Rendez-Vous with French Cinema." March 13 at
3:30 and 9:45 and March 15 at 9: "Tanguy"
(2001, Étienne Chatiliez). ♦ March 13 at 6: "Les
Destinées" (2000, Olivier Assayas). ♦ March 14 at
1 and 6:30 and March 17 at 4: "Officers' Ward"
(2001, François Dupeyron). ♦ March 14 at 4 and
9:30 and March 17 at 7: "The Girl from Paris"
(2000, Christian Carion). ♦ March 15 at 1 and 6:15
and March 16 at 9:15: "Betty Fisher and Other
Stories" (2001, Claude Miller). ♦ March 15 at 3:30,
March 16 at 4, and March 17 at 9:30: "Tosca"
(2001, Benoît Jacquot). ♦ March 16 at 1:30: "Loin
(Far Away)" (2001, André Téchiné).



View of a fireworks celebration
from the Hôtel de Paris.

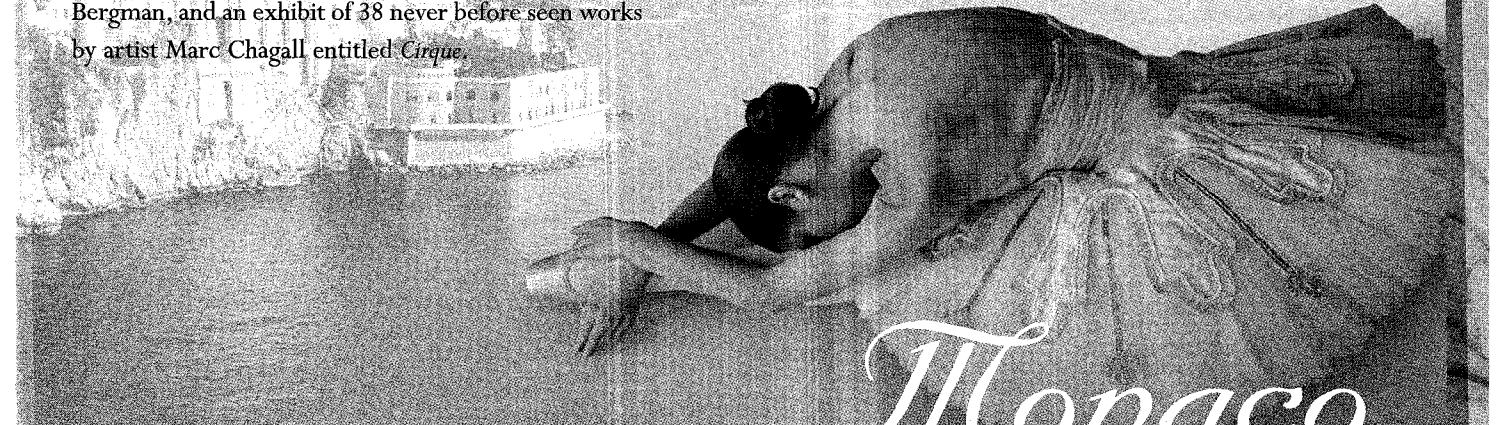
Monaco is in a New York State of Mind

Culture is alive and well in the Principality of Monaco, and this spring it is coming to New York. In April, the Monte-Carlo Philharmonic Orchestra performs live from Monaco's annual spring festival on New York's own WQXR Radio. Of course, why not delight all your senses and pay a personal visit to this mecca of arts and culture?

Savor the best of Monaco during the annual **Monte-Carlo Spring Arts Festival** (March 29-April 31), a month-long celebration combining music, dance, theatre, cinema and visual art. Highlights this year include performances by Monaco's Philharmonic and *Les Ballets de Monte-Carlo*, two Montreux Jazz Festival evenings featuring the Latino rhythms of Michel Camilo and Charlie Haden, a production of the film *Joan of Arc at the Stake* starring Ingrid Bergman, and an exhibit of 38 never before seen works by artist Marc Chagall entitled *Cirque*.

If you can't "spring" over to Monaco this season, then check out the myriad of exciting year-round events. July and August burst into the year with the annual **Fireworks Festival**, September gathers the world's most impressive yachts for the **Monaco Yacht Show**, October welcomes the **International Sculpture Festival** and December concludes the year with holiday festivities and the highly acclaimed **Monaco Dance Forum**.

From the electrifying roar of the Monaco F1 Grand Prix to the legendary tunes of the Monte-Carlo Philharmonic, this tiny Principality offers something for even the most discriminating aficionado. Come experience a most cultured time in one of the world's most cultured places.



Monaco.

MARCH

- 1-31: Marc Chagall Exhibit "Cirque"
- 1, 3: Monte-Carlo Opera: "Giulio Cesare"
- 6: World Music Awards
- 6: Monte-Carlo Opera: "Grand Choeurs d'Opera"
- 10, 17, 19, 31: Monte-Carlo Philharmonic Orchestra
- 13, 14: Glen Miller Memorial Orchestra
- 15, 17: Monte-Carlo Opera: "Dede"
- 16: Bal de la Rose
- 24: Monte-Carlo Opera: "I Due Foscari"
- 3/29-4/28: Spring Arts Festival
- 29: Le Poeme Harmonique concert
- 30: Les Veilleurs de Nuit perform *Les Sonates du Rosaire* (SAF)

APRIL

- 1-14: Marc Chagall Exhibit "Cirque"
- 1-28: Spring Arts Festival
- 2: Musicateize Ensemble Concert
- 6: Felicity Lott and Graham Johnson Concert
- 7, 14: Monte-Carlo Philharmonic Orchestra
- 8: Trio Wanderer and Paul Meyer Concert
- 11: Sei Voci and Tavagna Concert
- 13-21: Monte-Carlo Tennis Masters
- 21: Luxembourg Orchestra Concert
- 24-28: Les Ballets de Monte-Carlo

MAY

- 3-6: Monaco Garden Show
- 5: Monte-Carlo Philharmonic Orchestra
- 7: Monaco's Little Singers Concert
- 12-15: Laureus World Sports Awards
- 18, 19: 3rd Monaco Historic Grand Prix
- 23-26: 60th Monaco F1 Grand Prix

JUNE

- 1, 2: Les Ballets de Monte-Carlo
- 19-23: Forum Happy Hours
(Free outdoor concerts)
- 26: Monte-Carlo Philharmonic Orchestra

JULY

- 1-6: 42nd Int'l TV Festival
- 1-31: Int'l Sculpture Festival
- 9, 12, 13: Les Ballets de Monte-Carlo
- 9, 14, 17, 21, 24, 28: Monte-Carlo Philharmonic Orchestra at Prince's Palace
- 17-31: Circus Exhibit at Grimaldi Forum Monaco
- 18, 25: Int'l Fireworks Festival

AUGUST

- 1-31: Circus Exhibit at Grimaldi Forum Monaco
- 1-31: Int'l Sculpture Festival
- 1, 8: Int'l Fireworks Festival
- 2: Red Cross Ball
- 4, 7: Monte-Carlo Philharmonic Orchestra at Prince's Palace
- 17-25: Monte-Carlo Antiques Fair

SEPTEMBER

- 1-11: Circus Exhibit at Grimaldi Forum Monaco
- 1-30: Int'l Sculpture Festival
- 5-7: Pro-Celebrity Golf Tournament
- 25-28: 12th Monaco Yacht Show
- 29: Monte-Carlo Philharmonic Orchestra

OCTOBER

- 1-31: Int'l Sculpture Festival
- 12-20: Monaco Int'l Fair
- 27, 30: Monte-Carlo Philharmonic Orchestra

NOVEMBER

- 3, 7, 24, 27: Monte-Carlo Philharmonic Orchestra
- 17: Monaco Int'l Marathon
- 18, 19: Monaco National Day

DECEMBER

- 1, 8, 15, 29: Monte-Carlo Philharmonic Orchestra
- 10-14: 2nd Monaco Dance Forum
- 23-1/5: Les Ballets de Monte-Carlo

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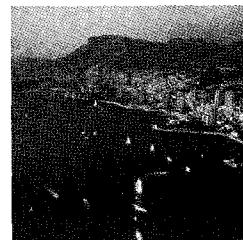
This spring, classical music lovers across America need only turn on their radios to enjoy the legendary sounds of the Principality of Monaco. "**Making Music in Monaco**," the popular radio series launched by the Monaco Government Tourist Office, is returning to radio stations in New York,

Los Angeles, Dallas, Houston and Chicago. The New York program begins at noon on March 9, 2002 and continues every Saturday at noon for fourteen weeks. For a full list of times and stations, visit www.monaco-tourism.com.

On Sunday, April 14, 2002 at 11:00AM, WQXR 96.3FM Radio in New York will present an exceptional **live broadcast from Monaco**, available worldwide on www.wqxr.com. The show will feature the Monte-Carlo Philharmonic Orchestra performing Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis* with soloists Cheryl Studer, Birgit Remmert, Christian Elsner and Franz Josef Selig under the artistic direction of Monaco's own Marek Janowski. **Make sure to tune in for an opportunity to win a free trip to Monaco on Air France.**



Monte-Carlo Opera ▲



Aerial view of Monaco ▲



Romeo and Juliet ▲

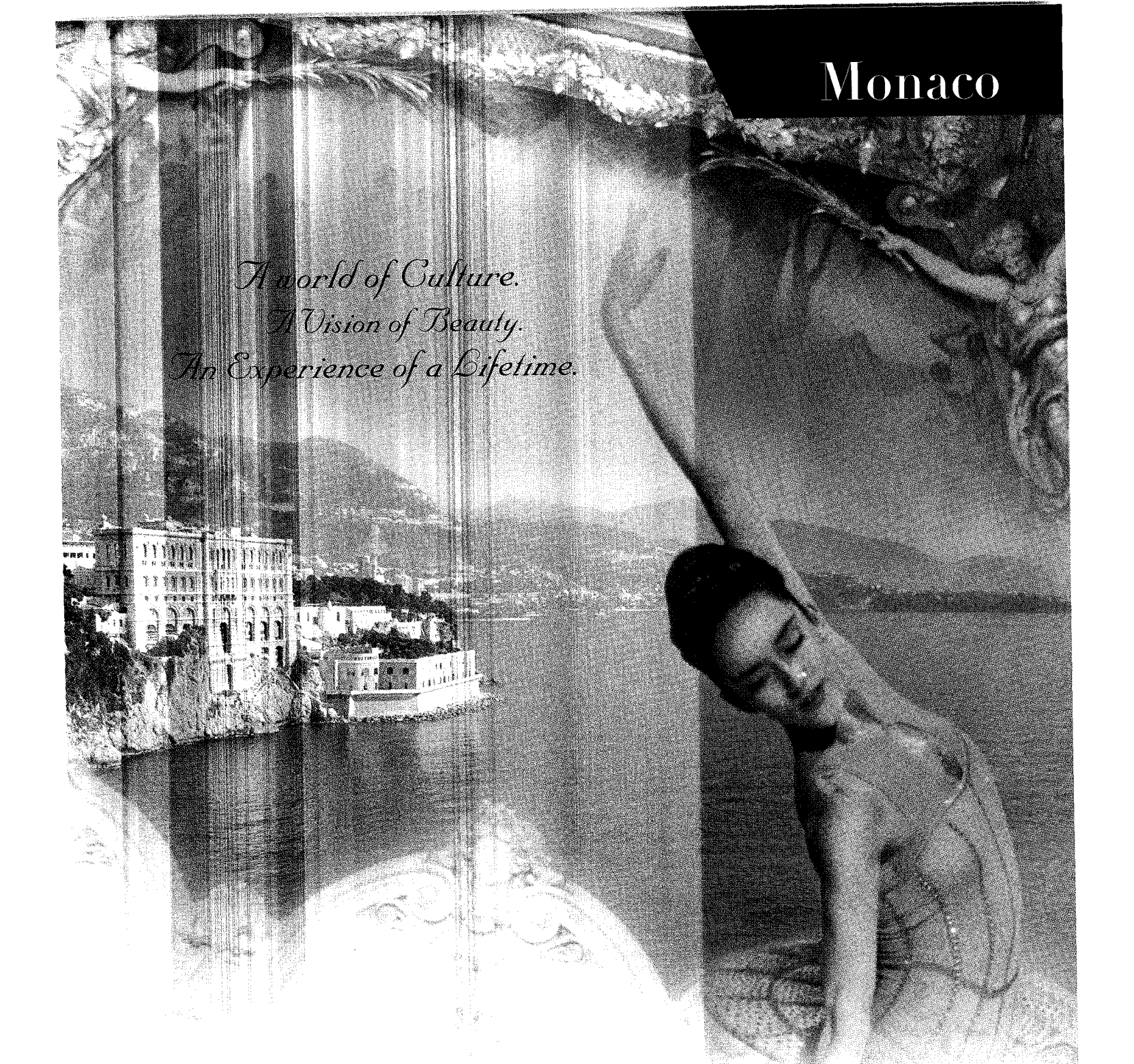
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THE TALK OF THE TOWN

COMMENT IN A DARK TIME



In 1988, a left-wing Israeli historian and journalist named Benny Morris published "The Birth of the Palestinian Refugee Problem, 1947-1949," which challenged the traditional Zionist view that the problems of the Palestinian Arabs were entirely of their own making. The book demonstrated that the Palestinians had neither ordered themselves off their land wholesale nor abandoned it voluntarily in hopes of a triumphant and bloody return; on the contrary, they had left their homes in Jaffa and Tiberias, West Jerusalem and Haifa in the hundreds of thousands mostly because they were driven out of them in wartime. The founding of Israel, like that of the United States, was a historical victory but it had not been without its original sin.

Morris does not deny that the Palestinians, first in 1937 and again in 1947, adamantly and foolishly rejected internationally sponsored partition plans and then went to war against the Israelis. But his scholarly deconstruction of a founding myth of the state—a myth enshrined in popular history, high-school textbooks, and standard patriotic rhetoric—met with tremendous resistance. After his book appeared, Morris was

eventually fired from his job at the *Jerusalem Post*. He had trouble getting work in the academy. And yet, with time, the "new historiography" that he helped to cultivate was one of many currents, political and moral, as well as intellectual, that led an increasing number of Israelis to question not the Zionist idea of a Jewish homeland but the blinkered, orthodox version of Zionist history. The French philosopher and historian Ernest Renan once wrote that a nation "is a group of people united by a mistaken view about the past and a hatred of its neighbors." Perhaps, but such unity is not immutable. Most Israelis, weary of the onus of occupation, proved ready to rethink the past and live with, if not adore, the Palestinians. Part of what masked the practical perils of the Oslo Accords of 1993 was the seductive notion that for the first time both sides were prepared to recognize each other and live peacefully as neighbors.

As it turned out, while even most conservative Israelis (including Ariel

Sharon) conceded that there would, in the end, be a Palestinian state, the Palestinians had not necessarily altered their own founding myths and intentions. Forget Hamas and Islamic Jihad and their culture of martyrdom and absolute victory. Last year, Faisal Husseini, a decided moderate among Yasir Arafat's leadership ranks, gave an interview not long before he died in which he compared Oslo to a Trojan horse, an intermediate, tactical step leading to the elimination of Israel. He said, "If you are asking me as a Pan-Arab nationalist what are the Palestinian borders according to the higher strategy, I will immediately reply: 'From the river to the sea'—that is, from the Jordan to the Mediterranean."

Right-wingers in Israel have long argued that such remarks reflect the true faith of the Palestinian mainstream. Hope was the reserve of the left. Now, it seems, there is not much hope left, and not much of a left, either—not in the short term, anyway.



LAURENT CULLUFFO

What is the evidence? A fairly indicative event was the publication in the London *Guardian*, a few weeks ago, of "Peace? No Chance," an essay by the same Benny Morris, in which he sheepishly concedes that Arafat's rejection of the Israeli and American peace plans in 2000 and the intifada that has raged for a year and a half have left him feeling "a bit like one of those western fellow travelers rudely awakened by the trundle of Russian tanks crashing through Budapest in 1956."

Morris is hardly one of those political performance artists (like the Dancing Davids, Brock and Horowitz) who make a career of ideological costume changes. His gloom is emblematic of the mood of many Israelis who for years insisted on moral decency and territorial compromise and now find themselves without a rejoinder to fury. Shlomo Avineri, a prominent academic on the Israeli left, has said, "Whoever expected Yasir Arafat to turn into Nelson Mandela was proved wrong, but admitting it is hard. Incredibly hard." And A. B. Yehoshua, who is among Israel's most distinguished novelists, and who is known for a certain gentleness of rhetoric, told the Arab-Israeli weekly *Kul Al-Arab* last December, "When Arafat stubbornly insisted on rejecting Barak's proposals at Camp David, he brought a catastrophe upon his Palestinian people. . . . Frankly, I'll tell you that personally, I hate Arafat from the bottom of my heart. The dream which we have been trying to realize since 1967—the establishment of a Palestinian state alongside Israel—amounts today to fiction."

Now each day brings reasons for despair, a new one for every shattered body on every bloodstained gurney, and the surfacing of a peace proposal sponsored by the Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia does not automatically lift the spirit. The Saudi royal family is eager above all to repair its standing with Washington; its sincerity in the matter of peace with Israel may legitimately be doubted. And yet to stop at despair, in matters political as well as spiritual, is the unforgivable sin. There is no future in it. And there is promise in the idea of the Saudis lining up the governments of the Arab League behind a formal declaration of willingness to accept, recognize, and normalize rela-

tions with Israel (on the condition, of course, that Israel make every concession conceivable, and then some). There is promise, too, in the idea that Arafat—old, sick, and unchanging—may eventually be succeeded by one in his camp who will join the Israelis in giving up the divergent fantasies of the past and become serious about mutual compromise and normal life on this earth.

It is impossible to expect the Israelis, left wing or right, to embrace without hesitation such ephemeral-sounding hopes while they are engaged in combatting the suicide-and-murder intifada that is killing everybody, Jew and Palestinian, in body and spirit. But they have responded to promise in dark times before. The Saudis and the Arab League, in general, would do well to pressure the Palestinians to give up their Trojan-horse strategies and settle for lesser dreams. The compromises that are necessary have been obvious for years: an end to occupation and violence; the dismantling of Israeli settlements and the abandonment of Palestinian demands for a "right of return" that would effectively dissolve Israel as a Jewish state; a demilitarized but viable Palestinian state, with borders dictated by the rational demands of security, not the maximal demands of mythology and faith. The choices are difficult. But the alternative is the explosion in the marketplace and the assassin in the grass, and the sirens and the corpses that come after.

—David Remnick

WATER DEPT. GOING DRY

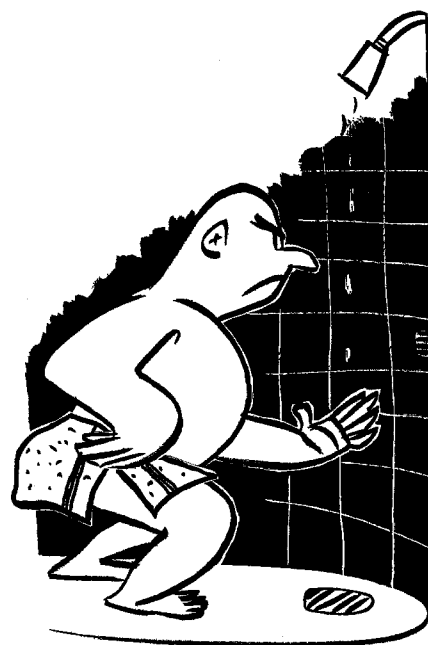


Another week without rain, more pictures of reservoirs at low tide. New York is facing a summer of brown lawns, short showers, dirty cars, and guilty flushes, amid predictions that even a regular storm diet may not be enough to stave off drought. What is to be done?

In 1964, during the city's worst drought to date, Gold Medal Books published a paperback novel entitled "The Day New York Went Dry," by

Charles Einstein. "It's 1967 in New York, and if you want a drink of water—get out of town," the cover copy read. "Don't wash your sidewalk. Don't wash your car. In fact, don't wash yourself. Why not? It's the law."

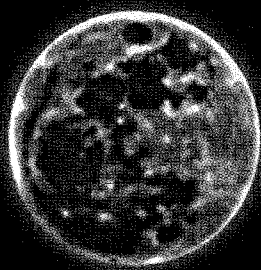
In the book, which deals with civil-rights as well as water issues, a handful of prominent citizens try to rescue the



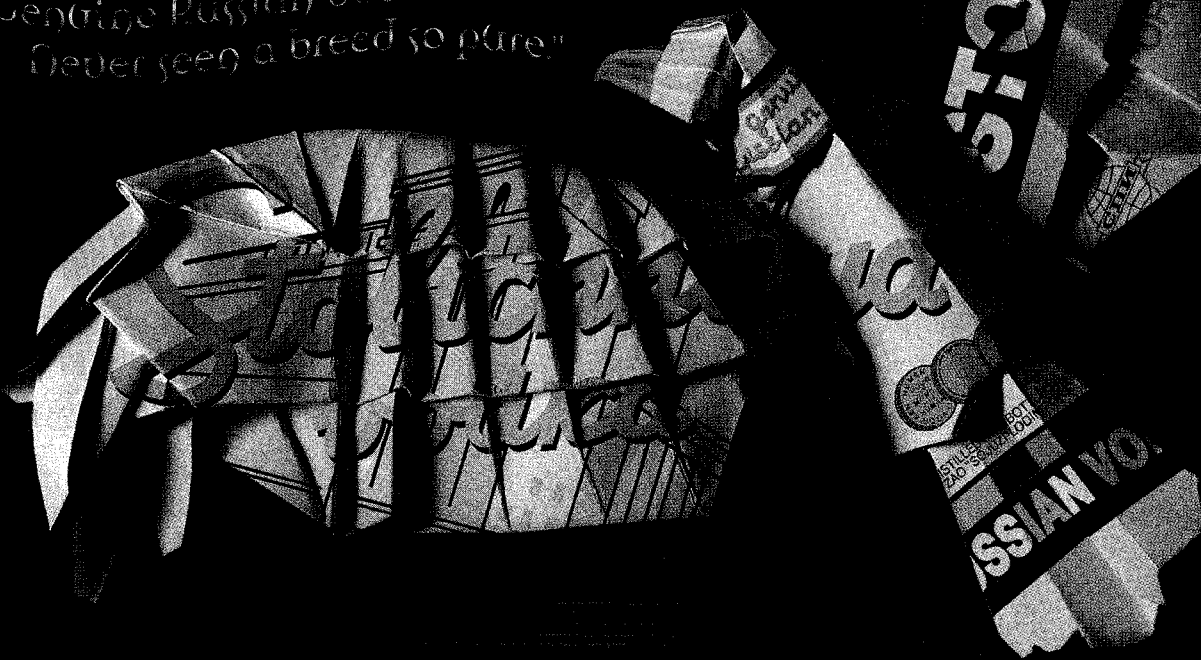
city from a catastrophic water shortage. They jockey to get the debauched scion of an old New York family, DeLesseps Martineaux III—Delly, to his friends in "the jet set"—to support their pet initiatives. Whatever his faults, Delly has influence. A senator from Alabama persuades him to back a scheme to ship New York's black residents to Africa and thus reduce pressure on the water supply. But a New York congressman and a wire-service editor named Marlowe eventually get Delly to endorse more reasonable measures—among them a campaign urging citizens not to drink liquids with their meals, and waterless Tuesdays and Fridays. (This imagined drought is severe enough to force a parched Pennsylvania to invade New York.) In the end, thanks, in part, to Delly, the city is saved. It is a quaint notion: that a dissolute socialite's public pronouncements could inspire New Yorkers to change their ways. But, if that is what it takes, then that is what it takes.

Fortunately, we're not there yet. The reservoirs are half full. Still, New Yorkers are starting to think about drought. One

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evening last week, the city held a seminar for property owners who are interested in conserving water. Attendance was sparse. Four civilians sat glumly, like habitual speeders condemned to remedial driver's ed, in a small conference room on the sixth floor of a government office building on Gold Street. At one end of the room there was a mail cart loaded with kitchen and bathroom fixtures: showerheads, faucets, filters, the innards of toilets. The leader of the seminar was a Department of Environmental Protection project manager named Rick Gunthorpe, a stocky, freckled man in brown corduroys and a giant sweater. He spoke rapidly, with great enthusiasm.

"There are many activities you can do personally to conserve water," he said, and went on to explain that there are three major water-shortage designations: drought watch, drought warning, and drought emergency. Currently, he said, we are in a drought warning, which means that, for example, when washing your car you must use a hose with a self-closing nozzle.

"What's a self-closing nozzle?" asked one of the attendees, an aspiring landlord named Vincent. He had the face of a bulldog. On the table in front of him was a plastic grocery bag holding some of his belongings.

"What's a self-closing nozzle? That's a good question," Gunthorpe said. He explained that it was a hose with a nozzle that shuts off the flow of water by itself.

"I never seen one," Vincent said.

"I'll send you one," Gunthorpe said. "In fact, we may send them out to people as a pet project."

"That's very interesting. Thank you."

"You're welcome."

Most of Gunthorpe's lecture had to do with toilets, which he pronounced "tawlets." Vincent complained that he usually has to flush the toilet in his apartment twice. Gunthorpe said that, generally speaking, this was not good.

"What is the best toilet?" Vincent asked.

"I can't answer that," Gunthorpe said. "It's like asking, 'What's the best car?' There are hundreds of different low-consumption toilets."

"Hundreds?"

"Literally hundreds, yeah."

"Wow. Thanks."

"People use their toilets for every-

thing—as a receptacle for garbage, food," Gunthorpe said. "For example, you can't put rice in a toilet."

"Or grease."

"Grease. Exactly."

Another thing you're not supposed to do is put a brick in the tank of your toilet, as people sometimes do, to lower the flush volume. Gunthorpe explained that bricks tend to leave sediment in the tank and can gum up the works.

"Oh, really?" Vincent said. "I didn't know that."

Gunthorpe produced something that he called a tank bag, which looks like a hot-water bottle and is preferable to a brick, and passed it around the room. Each attendee spent a few moments looking it over.

"What will they think of next!" Vincent exclaimed, passing it along.

After some talk of showerheads, leaks ("Leaks are insidious"), and water audits, it was time for a break. Gunthorpe stepped outside and had a drink of water at the fountain. "It's good water," he said.

—Nick Paumgarten

WHODUNIT DEPT. THE ANTHRAX CULPRIT



Barbara Hatch Rosenberg, a slight woman with short graying hair and deeply concerned hazel eyes, who works out of a small office at the State University of New York at Purchase, thinks she knows who was responsible for the anthrax attacks last October. Rosenberg is, to use the technical term, not chopped liver: she is a veteran molecular biologist and one of the world's leading experts on biological weapons. In 1998, she was one of a group of seven scientists who were invited to the White House to brief President Clinton on the subject. Yet her theory sounds like the plot of a conspiracy thriller, which is not usually true of experts' theories, especially on matters this grave.

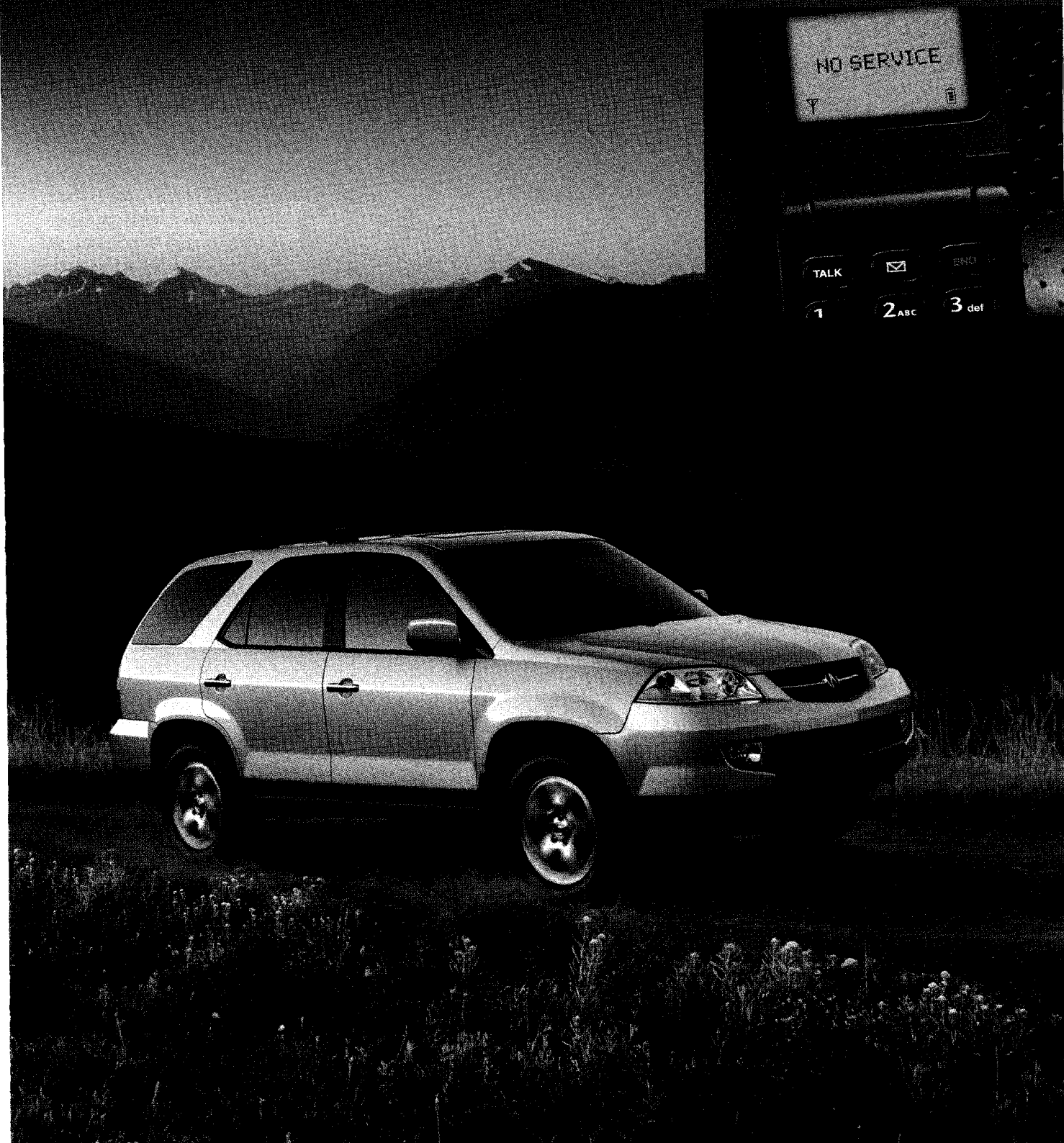
On February 5th, Rosenberg posted an item on a Web site that she maintains for the Federation of American Scientists called "Commentary: Is the F.B.I. Dragging Its Feet?," in which she strongly im-

plied that the F.B.I. was moving much more slowly in its anthrax investigation than it had any reason to. About the perpetrator she has in mind, she asked, "Does he know something that he believes is sufficiently damaging to the United States to make him untouchable by the F.B.I.?" It's important to note that, in addition to being an expert, Rosenberg has a political agenda: she is a committed campaigner for outside monitoring of biological-weapons laboratories. Although several local newspapers and the online magazine *Salon* ran articles on Rosenberg, it took a surprisingly long time—nearly three weeks—for her sensational Web posting to make an official impact, but on February 25th, after the *Washington Times* published a story that the F.B.I. had a prime suspect who sounded a lot like Rosenberg's, an array of top government officials, including Ari Fleischer, of the White House, and Robert Mueller III, of the F.B.I., were forced to address it—which is to say, deny it—publicly.

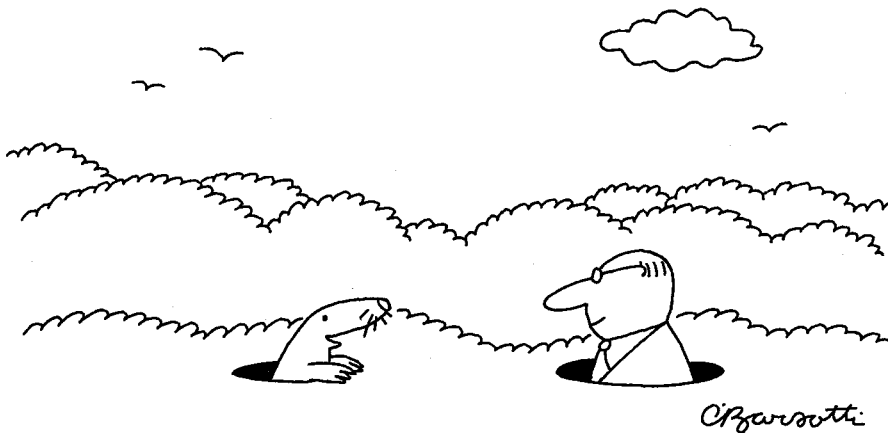
Here is Rosenberg's theory: All of the anthrax letters were sent by one person, a middle-aged man who had worked at the U.S. Army Medical Research Institute of Infectious Diseases, at Fort Detrick, Maryland, and who was familiar with the method of weaponizing anthrax devised by William Patrick III, the longtime head of bioweapons research at Fort Detrick. The perpetrator now works for a Washington-area subcontractor to the U.S. biological-weapons program. He is, as Rosenberg puts it, "not a normal person," and has a pattern of erratic behavior. She believes he received some kind of career setback after he left Fort Detrick that caused him to become "confused, upset, depressed, angry." He decided to retaliate with the anthrax attacks, with which, Rosenberg guesses, he meant to accomplish two things: first, "he's showing somebody how good he is" at producing and distributing weaponized anthrax, and thus proving that the career setback was unwarranted; and, second, he wanted to get the government to invest more in bioweapons research, which would mean a budget increase for his current employer.

During the summer of 2001, Rosenberg suspects, the perpetrator prepared his anthrax. When the September 11th attacks occurred, he saw a perfect opportunity to strike, and to cover his tracks.

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"Wow—I've never met a Cabinet Secretary before."

Before he mailed any of the anthrax letters, he sent an anonymous letter to the military police at the Marine Corps base in Quantico, Virginia, that was meant to raise suspicions about Ayaad Assaad, an Egyptian-born scientist who was formerly a colleague of his at Fort Detrick and who now works at Quantico. For the same reason, the anthrax letters themselves sometimes included notes with crude Muslim slogans.

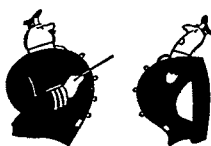
Rosenberg thinks the perpetrator wasn't trying to kill people—hence the enclosed announcements about what was in the letters, and the admonitions to take penicillin—but he wasn't concerned enough to avoid the risk altogether. He wound up murdering five people, and sowed fear and disruption among millions—all to prove a point to an internal audience, the tiny bioweapons community. In a more benign way, Rosenberg is trying to prove a point, too. The United States officially forswore biological-weapons development in 1969, and signed the 1972 Biological Weapons Convention, along with many other nations. But Rosenberg believes that the American bioweapons program, which won't allow itself to be monitored, may not be in strict compliance with the convention. If the perpetrator of the anthrax attacks is who she thinks it is, that would put the American program in a bad light, and it would prove that she was right to demand that the program be monitored.

Is Rosenberg's theory right? At the very least, she is persuasive in arguing that sending the anthrax letters required not just access to the "Ames strain" of anthrax

but also knowledge of the weaponization technique developed by Bill Patrick. If the government is saying that the perpetrator was probably an American, it's hard to imagine how it couldn't have been an American who worked in a government-supported bioweapons lab. Think back to the panicky month of October: would knowing that have made you less nervous, or more?

—Nicholas Lemann

IN THE GALLERIES ART COPS



Alberto Goris and Salvatore Zisa, a pair of thirty-four-year-old narcotics detectives and self-taught painters, enjoy spending Sundays on Museum Mile, even though, as Goris says, "Our wives are like, 'You just *went* to the museum!'" The other day, Goris and Zisa rode uptown in a taxi from the gallery at Pace University, where their first exhibition, "Cop Art," opened several weeks ago, to spend the afternoon at the Whitney.

Goris, who has long lashes and a pentagon of neatly trimmed facial hair around his mouth, pointed out a stretch of sidewalk on West Broadway, in SoHo, where, prior to getting the show at Pace, the two of them used to sell their work every Saturday.

"I don't think we'd ever go back to the streets," said Zisa, a stocky fellow in a

Carhartt coat and paint-smeared work boots. Zisa has fourteen and a half years on the force; Goris two years less. "But we've been painting forever," Zisa said. "We were always painters. We just became cops. Yeah, most cops go into a bar and talk about the job. On the job, we're like, 'Did you get the new *ARTnews* or *Artforum*?'"

"There's this movie called 'Basquiat,'" Goris said. "We've watched it, like, a thousand times. There's a part where Benicio Del Toro says it takes four years to become famous and six years to get rich. In three years since we started selling on the street, we got a show!"

"So we're, like, ahead of the game."

Zisa's paintings are abstract and evoke a chalkboard—there are mathematical equations, stick figures, slogans ("Simple Is Best," "Amor Omnia Vincit"). He says Keith Haring is a major influence. Goris makes figurative Pop art and is often inspired by fashion magazines. "My dream gallery is Mary Boone," he said. "I know she got arrested one day, for handing out live rounds in one of her shows. The cops locked her up. She went into central booking and everything. People said it was a publicity stunt, but—*nah*. We sent her an invitation to our opening, because one of my paintings, 'Target,' actually has spent shells in it." The shells are from the .38-caliber handgun he carries in his waistband, next to a 9-mm. "United We Stand" (\$3,500), one of the few paintings that Goris has made since September 11th, is done in the fashion of "American Gothic," with an M-16 in place of the pitchfork and the World Trade Center ruins in place of the old farmhouse.

When Goris and Zisa arrived at the Whitney, they took the elevator up to the fifth floor. Goris drifted toward Joseph Cornell's "Grand Hotel Bon Port," a box with a reproduction of a Vermeer pasted inside. "That's van . . . van . . . no, Vermeer—'Lady with a Pearl Earring'! No—'Girl with a Pearl Earring.'"

Zisa pointed to a delicate Calder mobile. "My cat would love this," he said.

"Hey, is that a Picasso?" Goris shouted. "Ah, no. It's Gorky. Same style." He lowered his voice reverentially. "Picasso knew a lot of guys."

Zisa nodded. "Picasso and Braque—they hung out and took from each other. That might be us someday."

—Dana Goodyear

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THE FINANCIAL PAGE FARE GAMES

A few months ago, a team of trained researchers infiltrated the rush-hour crowds in midtown Manhattan, took up positions on busy street corners, and began gesticulating wildly. No one noticed, because the researchers were doing what a lot of other people were doing: attempting to flag down a cab. You may not be surprised to hear that they didn't have much luck. The researchers' experiment proved, as such experiments often do, what most civilians already knew. "There are times of the day and parts of midtown where it is virtually impossible to find a cab," Bruce Schaller, the transportation consultant who designed the study, told me last week.

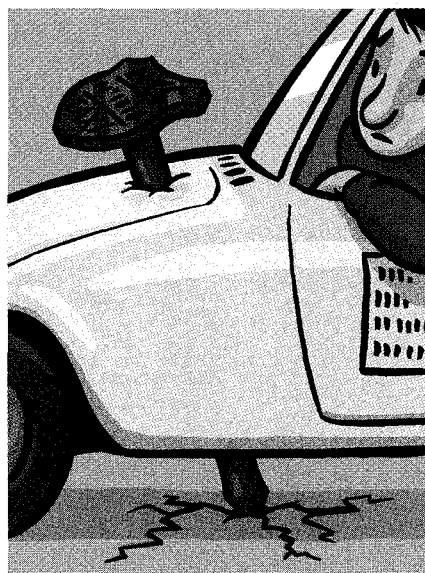
New York has a taxicab crunch. In recent years, according to Schaller, cabs have carried passengers sixty-five per cent of the time they're in operation. That figure is high, historically speaking, and although after September 11th ridership fell as tourism slumped, the bigger picture still looks the same: too many passengers, too few cabs.

The taxi industry has a simple answer to this problem: raise fares. In November, the big fleet owners petitioned the Taxi and Limousine Commission for a twenty-three-per-cent fare hike. And last month Mayor Bloomberg added his support, though he didn't commit to a particular number. Raising fares, Bloomberg said, is the only way to insure that there will be enough cabs on the streets.

On the face of it, raising prices would seem to be the perfect solution: the more money cabbies can make, the more cabs there will be. But the taxi business doesn't work that way. It's not as if, when prices go up, someone can just slap a coat of yellow paint on a Crown Victoria and start collecting fares. To operate a cab in New York, you need a medallion. And the city has frozen the supply of medallions at around twelve thousand. If there are too few cabs on the road, it's not because of low fares. It's because the city—under pressure from fleet owners, among others, who contribute generously to the right politicians—has kept the number

of medallions artificially low. In fact, New York has almost ten thousand fewer cabs today than it did seventy years ago.

But it isn't just cabs that are in short supply; it's cabbies as well. And that, too, is an unintended consequence of the medallion system. Since it's a rare cabbie who can scrounge up two hundred thousand dollars to buy a medallion, most cabbies work for somebody else—the big corporate fleets or management companies that own the medallions. Once upon a time, that wasn't such a bad deal. Cabbies used to work on commission, splitting their take with the fleet owners. (Even Travis Bickle managed to make a decent living.) But in 1979 the city decided to allow leasing. Today, most cab-



bies have to pay their lease rate up front (about a hundred dollars a day) and pay for their own gas; they get to keep what they make during their shift. Essentially, cabbies are like sharecroppers: their day is spent trying to dig themselves out of a hole. Because lease rates are high, the cabbies have a hard time doing that. It's not uncommon for a driver to put in a twelve-hour day and clear less than a hundred bucks. It isn't much of a career.

If the taxi industry really wants more drivers, it should offer better wages, which means that it should cut its lease rates. The fleet owners might earn a little less, but they can afford to. The price of a medallion has quadrupled in the past twenty years, which suggests that running a fleet is a pretty good way to make a profit.

Taxi owners argue that raising fares would be enough to boost drivers' wages and, consequently, put more cabs on the streets. But the big winners would probably just be the owners themselves. The last time fares went up, in 1996, owners responded by raising their lease rates. If another fare hike goes through, they'll probably do it again (if the city will let them). Maybe taxi fares should be higher, but if the goal is to get more cabbies on the road, then a fare hike alone won't do the trick.

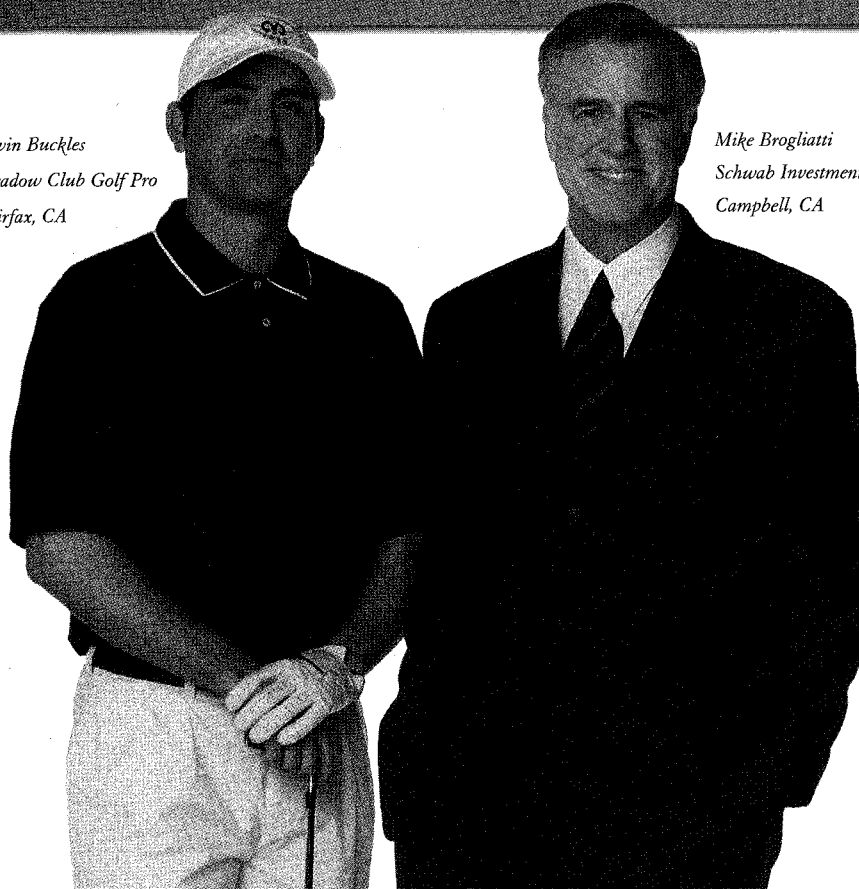
In fact, even if the drivers did get most of the money from a fare increase, midtown would not suddenly be flush with available cabs. Taxi-drivers tend not to respond to such incentives. Rather, they engage in what economists call "daily income targeting." According to a 1997 study by four behavioral economists, cabbies set themselves a target every day and work only as much, or as little, as they must to reach it ("I needed one more fare to make my night," Harry Chapin sang in "Taxi"). On days when passengers are abundant, cabdrivers work fewer hours, and on slow days they work more. This isn't exactly income maximizing. What they should do is work more when business is good and less when it's bad. The economists found that if cabbies did this, they could boost their income by fifteen per cent. But since they don't, raising fares will mean that drivers will hit their daily targets sooner and knock off earlier. Indeed, after the 1996 fare hike, Schaller says, cabbies wound up driving slightly less.

If we really want to increase the supply of cabs, the simplest thing to do is increase the supply of cabs. The city could auction off new medallions, as it did six years ago, when it sold four hundred new ones. Selling a thousand more medallions would put a thousand more taxis on the streets. And New York would reap a nice little dividend: two hundred million dollars or so, which would come in handy, in these lean budgetary times. How often does the city get a chance to improve its standard of living and fatten its coffers at the same time? Maybe this makes too much sense to work, but someday, as a famous cabbie once said, a real rain will come.

—James Surowiecki

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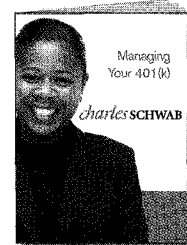
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HELPING HANDS

How foreign aid could benefit everybody.

BY JOHN CASSIDY

Last summer, the economist William Easterly published a book entitled "The Elusive Quest for Growth: Economists' Adventures and Misadventures in the Tropics," in which he described how governments in many poor countries, particularly in Africa, have frittered away large amounts of aid money given to them by rich countries. People have written books critical of aid policy before, but the origin of this one was unusual: its author had spent sixteen years at the World Bank, the Washington-based international agency that runs many of the development programs he was criticizing.

Easterly's book read like the testimony of a Mafia turncoat who knew not only where the bodies were buried but who had put them there and why.

He pointed out that between 1950 and 1995 the developed world dispensed the equivalent of more than a trillion dollars in today's money in economic assistance, yet many of the aid recipients remain poverty-stricken. Zambia, for example, received no fewer than twelve adjustment loans from the World Bank and its sister organization, the International Monetary Fund, between 1980 and 1994, yet it is still poorer, on a per-capita basis, than it was at independence, in 1964. Easterly listed dozens of countries that wasted significant amounts of aid, including Kenya, Tanzania, Somalia, Sierra Leone, Nicaragua, Haiti, and, most notoriously of all, Zaire (now the Democratic Republic of the Congo), where Mobutu Sese Seko and his cronies shipped money out

of the country to their private bank accounts as fast as the World Bank and the I.M.F. could send it in.

Writing in the prologue, Easterly praised his employer for the fact that it "encourages gadflies like me to exercise intellectual freedom," but it turned out that he had tested this tolerance to the breaking point. His book appeared at the same time that many countries were pushing for a big increase in the resources devoted to the World Bank and other aid agencies. In September, 2000, in a Millennium Declaration, the members of the United Nations committed to an ambitious set of international development goals by 2015, including halving the number of people living in extreme poverty, a two-thirds reduction in child mortality, a reversal of the spread of H.I.V./AIDS, and the provision of primary education for children the world over. In order to meet these targets, the U.N. members, including the United States, pledged to provide "more generous development assistance" to poor countries, particularly those genuinely striving to reduce poverty. Following the events of September 11, 2001, many countries stepped up the pressure for increased aid, arguing that, in the words of Gordon Brown, Britain's Chancellor of the Exchequer, "what happens to the poorest citizen in the poorest country can directly affect the richest citizen in the richest country." Easterly's book amounted to a fierce assault on the case for more aid. Not surprisingly, many of his seniors didn't like its timing or its contents, and they didn't hide their displeasure. Last fall, Easterly went on indefinite leave from the World Bank, and he is now based at the Center for Global Development, a Washington think tank, where he is working on proposals to reform aid programs.

Easterly does not have a political agenda—"Economic development is too important to be left to politicians," he told me a couple of weeks ago—but since he left the World Bank senior officials at the Treasury Department have picked up on his work. Some of Easterly's arguments have started to show up in the speeches of Paul O'Neill, the blunt-talking Treasury Secretary. At the beginning of February, at the World Economic Forum, O'Neill repeated Easterly's point that many aid recipients remain chronically poor. The international community, O'Neill ar-

VICTOR JUHASZ



Many rich nations think increased aid is crucial. The Bush Administration disagrees.

gued, should concentrate on “learning and saying in a forthright way what hasn’t worked and why, so that we can agree to stop making such interventions.” Referring to the Bush Administration’s decision to cut off economic support to Argentina last fall, O’Neill said it was ridiculous to expect America’s “plumbers and carpenters” to pay for the mistakes of foreign governments.

These harsh words were accompanied by actions. Next week, President Bush will attend a United Nations conference on international development, in Monterrey, Mexico. The initial version of the communiqué to be issued at the conference included an unequivocal pledge from all advanced countries to raise the amount that they spend on overseas aid each year from the current average of 0.22 per cent of gross national product to 0.7 per cent. In late January, the United States insisted on making the aid target a vague aspiration rather than a firm commitment. Other U.N. members, fearful that the American President might pull out of the upcoming conference, reluctantly went along with the change.

Campaigners for higher aid spending now fear that the Monterrey meeting will be merely the latest in a long line of United Nations events that promised much and delivered little. Easterly agrees with that assessment, but he is not overly disappointed. “There’s been for decades a misplaced emphasis on the volume of money disbursed to poor countries as a measure of the success of aid policies,” Easterly said to me. “I’m afraid the Monterrey conference is very much in that tradition.”

The Bush Administration has coupled its tough line on aid with a call for reform of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. It is pressing for changes in the way aid is distributed, with grants being substituted for loans in many cases. The Treasury Department is also demanding that future funding of the international aid agencies be tied to results. If aid programs don’t result in measurable improvements in developing countries, it argues, their budgets should be curtailed.

The history of overseas aid began with unrealistic expectations. Back in the nineteen-fifties and sixties, many economists believed it would be possi-

ble to mimic the success of the Marshall Plan, the aid program that the United States extended to Europe after the Second World War. According to the wisdom of the time, countries in Africa, Asia, and Latin America had plenty of investment opportunities, but they didn’t have enough savings to take advantage of them. Once this “investment gap” had been filled by an influx of foreign aid, the thinking went, the economies of countries like Zambia, India, and Brazil would start to grow rapidly, and eventually, sometime in the not too distant future, the gap with the developed world would be closed. In 1969, the Pearson Commission, an advisory panel to the World Bank, proposed a target of six-per-cent annual economic growth in the developing world over the next decade. The countries that reached this threshold and boosted their exports, the panel claimed, would become “self-reliant partners” in the international economy by the year 2000.

Of course, this didn’t happen. Aid spending increased—to a peak of sixty-one billion dollars in 1992—but many poor countries entered a prolonged period of economic stagnation, and some of them actually regressed. (In Ghana, for example, per-capita income fell at an annual rate of 1.6 per cent between 1961 and 1983.) The gap between the developed world and the underdeveloped world gets wider every year. About half the world’s population subsists on less than two dollars a day. One-sixth of the world’s population—about a billion people—lives on less than a dollar a day.

The increase in aid budgets didn’t cause these disastrous developments—in Africa, especially, the main culprits were corruption, civil war, and famine—but in many places it didn’t do much to foster economic development, either. In 1994, Peter Boone, at the London School of Economics, examined the historical record for a large number of developing countries and found no meaningful correlation between levels of aid and rates of growth—a result that was confirmed by subsequent studies. Given this evidence, it is perhaps not surprising that many rich countries cut back their overseas-aid budgets sharply during the nineteen-nineties. Between the beginning and the end of the decade, the total amount of

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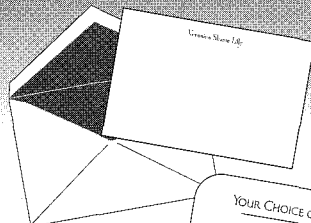


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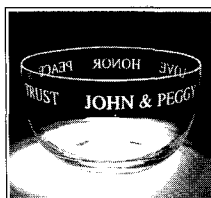
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economic assistance extended to poor countries fell by about a third in current dollars. Relative to the size of rich economies, the decline was even greater. In the United States in 1990, for example, the overseas-aid budget amounted to about 0.2 per cent of G.D.P. Ten years later, the figure had halved.

The reduction in aid budgets, understandable as it may be, has been too severe. Although much aid has been wasted, there are plenty of counterexamples where it has been well spent. During the nineteen-sixties and seventies, countries like Korea, Thailand, Botswana, and Chile used financial support and technical expertise from overseas to help them industrialize successfully. More recently, a number of poor countries, among them Mexico, Bolivia, and Ghana, have reformed their economies with the help of the World Bank and other international development agencies. In all these cases, the policy decisions of the governments concerned were key, but aid played an important supporting role. In some instances, the foreign money bought reformist governments enough time for their policies to work. In others, the know-how provided by aid agencies and foreign governments was at least as important as the cash.

As the World Bank pointed out in a 1998 survey of aid's effectiveness, "It is ironic—and tragic—that just as economic reform has created the best environment in decades for effective assistance, donors have cut aid back sharply." Uganda provides a good example of how aid coupled with policy reform can transform an economy. During the nineteen-sixties and seventies, two dictatorial leaders, Milton Obote and Idi Amin, plunged the country into famine, civil war, and economic chaos. But from the mid-eighties onward the donor community helped the reformist government of Yoweri Museveni to rebuild the country, controlling inflation and encouraging the development of private enterprise. During the past decade, Uganda's economy has grown at an annual rate of about seven per cent. At that rate of growth, the economy will double in size every ten years or so.

Money was an essential element in this success story—between 1987 and 1992, the World Bank alone lent Uganda more than a billion dollars—but it wasn't the only one. Foreign experts provided Museveni's government with invaluable advice in all areas of economic management, including monetary policy, tax policy, and poverty reduction. According to one account of the reform process, the

I.M.F. and the World Bank turned the Presidential residence into a "macro-economic classroom with the President." Even Easterly agrees that the results were impressive. The Ugandan experience "shows what can be done by good leadership" in developing countries, he told me.

Many critics of aid policy try to dismiss Uganda as an isolated example, but some important recent research suggests that aid can be effective in any country where it is accompanied by sensible economic policies. Studying fifty-six middle-income and low-income nations, Craig Burnside and David Dollar, two economists in the World Bank's research department, tried to identify the factors that determined how quickly their economies grew between 1970 and 1993. When Burnside and Dollar included all the countries in their sample, regardless of the economic policies their governments pursued, they found no link at all between aid and growth, thereby confirming Peter Boone's negative findings. But Burnside and Dollar didn't stop there. For each country in their study, they constructed an index of economic management based on how successful it had been in controlling inflation and the budget deficit, and how open to trade it was. When they redid their analysis to include that index as an explanatory variable, they found that aid "has a positive effect on growth in a good policy environment," and that the effect is substantial. A one-per-cent increase in the amount of aid that a poor country with sound policies receives relative to its G.D.P. is associated with a 0.5-per-cent increase in its annual growth rate and a one-per-cent reduction in its poverty rate. Between 1970 and 1993, developing countries with good economic policies but low aid payments grew at an annual rate of 2.2 per cent per capita, whereas developing countries with good economic policies and high aid payments grew almost twice as fast, at an annual rate of 3.7 per cent.

Burnside and Dollar's model doesn't explain precisely how increases in aid promote faster growth, but there are several possible explanations. One plausible theory is that when a reformist government comes to power in a developing country most private-sector investors, both foreign and domestic, are dubious

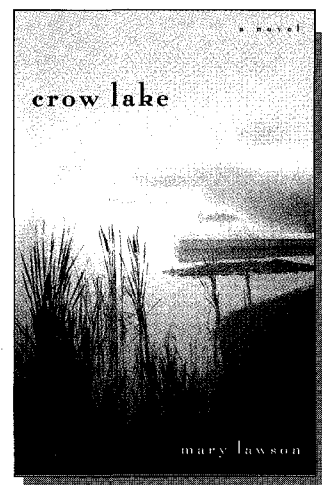
about its survival prospects, so they hold back. The announcement of an aid package reassures investors, and this leads to a surge in capital spending, which, in turn, leads to higher growth. Whatever mechanism explains the link between aid and growth, other economists have confirmed its existence. In a recent survey on the subject, the Paris-based Organization for Economic Coöperation and Development listed six studies that have confirmed that aid leads to positive results when accompanied by economic reform.

Perhaps the most surprising thing about Burnside and Dollar's results is the number of countries in their study with policies that were good enough to allow aid to have a positive impact on growth. By 1990, it was more than half. Even among the forty poorest nations in the sample, fifteen satisfied the policy criterion, and many of them were hardly model economies. They included Mali, Gambia, Morocco, Tunisia, Ecuador, Bolivia, El Salvador, and Honduras. If aid can spur development and reduce poverty in troubled countries like these, it is indeed time for a rethinking of policy, but not in the direction that the Bush Administration is suggesting.

Even a modest boost in aid could have a big impact. Many developing economies are tiny relative to developed economies, and, as long as the recipient country had decent policies in place, an increase of, say, five per cent of the country's G.D.P. would translate into a major alleviation of human suffering. According to the World Bank, a well-targeted rise in aid spending of ten billion dollars would lift about twenty-five million people out of poverty. The United Nations' development goals for 2015 are much more ambitious—they include lifting five hundred million people above the poverty line—but the cost of achieving those goals would not necessarily be prohibitive. In December, 2000, Kofi Annan, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, appointed a panel of international luminaries headed by Ernesto Zedillo, the former President of Mexico, to advise him on aid policy. The Zedillo panel concluded that the 2015 development goals could be met by increasing the average aid budget in rich countries to 0.44 per cent of G.D.P.—

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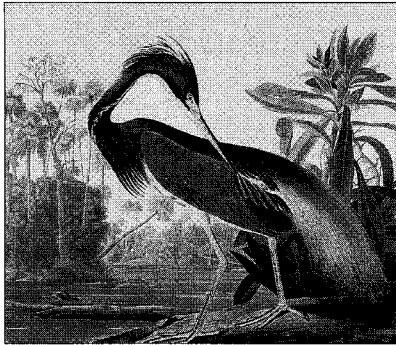
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well below the United Nations target of 0.7 per cent. Such a shift would involve devoting another fifty billion dollars a year to aid, which would almost double the amount that all the developed countries together currently spend.

As it happens, the Bush Administration has proposed to increase the Pentagon's budget by almost fifty billion dollars this year, subject to approval by Congress, taking it up to nearly three hundred and eighty billion dollars. Compared with that figure, the American aid budget, which currently runs about ten billion dollars a year, is a mere rounding error. In dollar terms, the United States spends more on aid than any other country except Japan, which spends thirteen and a half billion dollars. But, relative to the size of its economy, the United States has the smallest aid budget of any rich country: about 0.1 per cent of G.D.P. Italy and Greece are the only other Western countries that devote 0.2 per cent or less of their G.D.P. to aid. The most generous countries are Denmark (1.06 per cent), the Netherlands (0.84 per cent), and Sweden (0.8 per cent). The figure for Britain is 0.32 per cent; in Japan it is 0.28 per cent; and in Germany it is 0.27 per cent.

The Bush Administration is not responsible for the United States' laggard position here—the aid-to-G.D.P. ratio fell fastest during the Clinton Presidency—but it is not making any attempt to change it. Instead, the Administration is demanding better value for the money currently being spent. Many critics dismiss the Administration's calls for reform as an attempt to direct attention from how little the United States actually spends on aid. John Taylor, the Under-Secretary of the Treasury for International Affairs, sees things differently. "I think Americans are very generous people, but they are also people who want to be sure that their generosity is going to make a difference," Taylor told me when I visited his office last month. "Charitable giving is very high in this country, but people are very cognizant of whether a charitable organization is being effective or not."

Taylor, an economics professor on leave from Stanford, where he made his reputation in the field of monetary policy, reminded me that the Bush Administration, while keeping the over-all aid budget steady, has proposed to increase two areas of it substantially: the contributions that the United States makes to the International Development Associ-



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ation, an arm of the World Bank which lends money to poor countries, and to the African Development Bank. However, even these spending increases are conditional on improved results in individual aid programs. "You have to have certain standards of performance," Taylor insisted. "If aid is given to countries which don't match that standard, it is going to be squandered."

It is hard to argue with Taylor's point, but the United States is one of the biggest offenders when it comes to doling out aid according to political priorities, rather than directing it to where it will be best used. This year, Washington will send about seven hundred and twenty million dollars in economic assistance to Israel, six hundred and fifty-five million dollars to Egypt, a hundred and fifty million dollars to Jordan, and seventy-five million dollars to the West Bank and Gaza. The Middle East is far from being the poorest part of the world, but it gets much more American aid than any other region.

The money that Israel and Egypt receive is bilateral aid: the United States Agency for International Development transfers it directly to Jerusalem and Cairo. Bilateral aid makes up two-thirds of all aid, and it is notoriously inefficient, largely because countries that receive it feel little pressure to reform. Egypt, for example, has made scant economic progress despite all the cash it has received from the United States since making peace with Israel. In the past, some donor countries have insisted that bilateral-aid recipients spend the money on goods and services provided by the donor—a requirement that did more for businesses in the West than it did for the poor in the developing world. Other donors allowed colonial and cultural ties to sway their aid policies. The British government gave money to a succession of Nigerian dictators who promised, but failed, to deliver democracy. Sweden helped to keep Julius Nyerere, the Tanzanian socialist, in power long enough to wreck the Tanzanian economy. Multilateral aid—money pooled from more than one country and disbursed through international financial institutions—is often more effective than bilateral aid, but its disbursement is dominated by the World Bank and the I.M.F., and that is a problem for many

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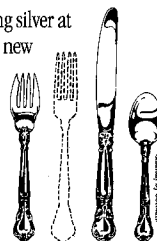


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people in Washington and elsewhere.

The international aid agencies tend to be criticized whatever they do. On the left, critics accuse them of carrying out the free-market agendas of multinational corporations and the United States government to the detriment of poor countries. On the right, critics like O'Neill and Taylor accuse them of throwing good money after bad at corrupt and incompetent regimes. In fact, the aid agencies are staffed with apolitical professionals who try to do their best in difficult circumstances. Although they have undoubtedly made many mistakes in the past, they have also changed their policies in the light of experience.

Forty years ago, the World Bank used to lend money for ambitious industrial projects, such as the Akosombo Dam, in Ghana, which created the world's largest man-made lake, Lake Volta. Many of these ventures ended badly, and agencies changed course. Industrial investment is now largely left to the private sector. The aid agencies, often in partnership with nongovernmental organizations, spend most of their money on improving education, health care, and other forms of "social capital" which the free market fails to provide. That hasn't solved all the problems. From the nineteen-eighties onward, the aid agencies made many of their loans contingent upon "structural adjustment programs" that involved sharp cutbacks in government spending. In Indonesia, Venezuela, and other countries, these policies led to bread riots. In parts of Africa, they undermined the aid agencies' own efforts to improve health services, just as the AIDS crisis erupted. Recently, however, there has been a movement toward making adjustment programs more flexible.

Although the White House and the Treasury Department don't seem to have noticed, the World Bank and the I.M.F. have also introduced elaborate monitoring regimes, which have improved the performance of individual loans. During the eighties, the World Bank classed about sixty per cent of its development projects as successful. These days, the success rate is about eighty per cent.

This is not enough for the Bush Administration. Taylor was openly dismissive of a recent British call for a new Marshall Plan for the developing world. He recalled how after the Berlin Wall fell

many people called for a Marshall Plan for Russia. "A lot of money was poured in, and a lot of it wasn't used very effectively," he said. "Now Russia is working a lot better. You don't have the big aid programs. You have some good people in there working on reforms, and that is really what is going to make a difference." Taylor and his colleagues believe it is up to other developing countries to follow Russia's example, in which case they will be rewarded by more aid, but also, more important, by more money from investors in the developed world. "We need to reverse the decline in private-sector flows in the past few years," Taylor said. "That means the countries themselves are going to have to take some actions to make themselves more attractive to capital."

I asked Taylor if he wasn't concerned about the political message that the Bush Administration was sending, especially abroad, by using such strong language toward what are, after all, the poorest nations on earth and the agencies that are trying to help them. "When you demand more of people or institutions, it doesn't mean that you don't like them," Taylor replied. "It means you love them, you want them to do better, so you demand more of the things you are responsible for. These calls for better performance are not calls to do less. They are calls to do more and do it better. I sincerely believe that."

Despite the Bush Administration's unyielding stance, an eventual increase in the level of financial assistance to poor countries is not completely out of the question. Ultimately, history suggests, aid policy is driven by broader considerations than cost-benefit analysis. In a message to Congress, in 1961, the newly elected President Kennedy described existing aid programs as "bureaucratically fragmented, awkward and slow," but he nonetheless proposed a big increase in the aid budget, for reasons that sound eerily modern. "Widespread poverty and chaos lead to a collapse of existing political and social structures, which would inevitably invite the advance of totalitarianism into every weak and unstable area," Kennedy said. "Thus our own security would be endangered and our prosperity imperiled. A program of assistance to the underdeveloped nations must continue because the

Nation's interest and the cause of political freedom require it."

Substitute "terrorism" for "totalitarianism" and the same argument can be advanced today. Robert Rubin, the former Treasury Secretary, who is now a senior executive at Citigroup, is perhaps the best-known figure to have taken it up. Last month, he told a conference at the Carter Center, in Atlanta, that defeating "poverty in poorer countries seems to me as critical to our national interest as defeating the spread of Communism in Western Europe after World War II." Rubin was a member of the Zedillo panel, which called for an international campaign to build public support for increased aid budgets, especially in the United States. Polls regularly show that Americans greatly overestimate how much money the country spends on aid programs. Unless voters gain a proper appreciation of the aid budget's size relative to other spending programs and the nation's G.D.P., there is little prospect of Congress's increasing it.

A number of European countries, including Britain and Greece, have already sharply increased their aid budgets. Italy, the United States' fellow-laggard in the international-aid league table, is expected to announce a big increase at Monterrey. If this happens, the Bush Administration will look even more isolated. Of course, it has already demonstrated on many issues, missile defense and global warming among them, that it is willing to act alone when it believes its policies are in the best interests of the United States. However, some leading figures in the development world have not given up hope that the President and his national-security team will eventually conclude, notwithstanding opposition from the Treasury, that extending a helpful hand to poor countries is an essential part of the war on terrorism. "I genuinely think that Washington doesn't know it yet, but it is going to increase aid by very large amounts in the next few years—just as before September 11th it had no idea that it was going to increase public spending generally," Mark Malloch Brown, the head of the United Nations Development Program, told me. "This is part of the new global arrangement post September 11th. If security is to be maintained, then development policy is going to be just as important as counter-terrorism." ♦

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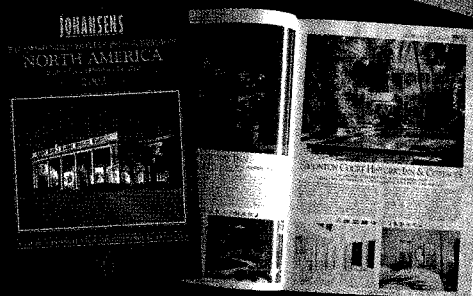
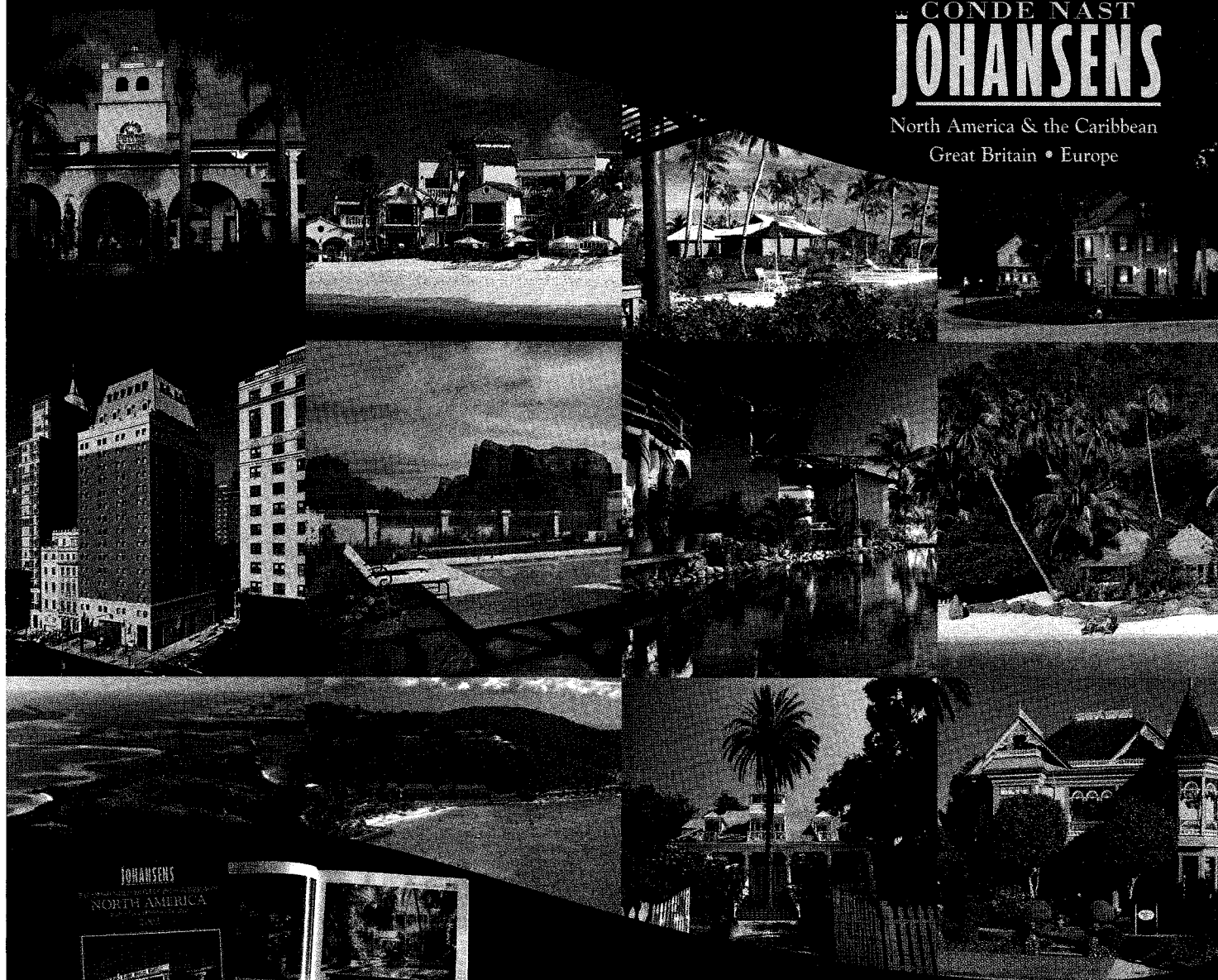
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BY ANDY BOROWITZ

And now, here's the *scoop du jour* on the final list of [Liza Minnelli's] wedding participants. Elizabeth Taylor and Marisa Berenson are the maids of honor. The bridesmaids will be Mia Farrow, Claudia Cardinale, Janet Leigh, Esther Williams, Gina Lollobrigida. . . . The groom's best men are Michael and Tito Jackson. His groomsmen are Jackie, Randy and Marlon Jackson, James Ingram, Tony Franciosa, Robert Wagner. . . .

—Liz Smith, in the Post, February 20, 2002.

Friendship is a funny thing. You can spend years thinking someone's your best friend in the world, and then one day you hear something that makes you wonder whether that person is your friend at all. Only you don't hear it from that person; you hear it from Claudia Cardinale.

"So I guess I'll see you at Liza's wedding, huh?" Claudia said to me the other day as we walked out of the AMC Empire 25, having just seen "Super Troopers." (Claudia and I try to go to the movies together at least once a week; Tony Franciosa, who usually joins us, had a head cold that day and begged off.)

This was the first I'd heard of Liza's wedding, and the stung look on my face must have given me away. "I think it's going to be very small," Claudia said lamely, before rushing off to have drinks with Mia Farrow and James Ingram.

Maybe I was in denial, but at first I thought, If Claudia Cardinale's invited and I'm not, so what? Even if you considered yourself one of Liza's closest friends, as I did, you knew that her inner circle consisted of just two people: Claudia Cardinale and Tito Jackson. If Liza had decided to have a private ceremony with only Claudia and Tito as witnesses, who was I to feel excluded?

That comforting version of things flew out the window, however, when I had dinner that night at the Outback Steakhouse with Esther Williams, Gina Lollobrigida, and Robert Wag-

ner. As the waiter brought us our Kookaburra Wings, Esther and Gina started gushing about their fittings for Liza's wedding, heaping praise on Bob Mackie for creating dream gowns that made "all the bridesmaids" look like Greek goddesses. Wagner must've seen the blood drain from my face, because he shot Gina and Esther a furtive not-in-front-of-him look, whereupon the ladies' conversation seamlessly shifted to the Nets' playoff chances.

For the next few days, I lived in near-constant fear of mortification. What if I ran into Janet Leigh or Marisa Berenson on the street—or Michael or Marlon or Randy Jackson, for that matter? Surely they all knew I hadn't been invited, for in a group as close-knit as ours there are no secrets. But soon my sense of personal embarrassment turned to resentment and, finally, to anger. What kind of "friends" would let Liza Minnelli ostracize one of their number in such a capricious way? After all of our years together—the ups and downs, the laughter and the tears, the scooter-related injuries of several years back—I felt as though I no longer knew these people.

So I've moved on, dumped the lot of them, and made a shiny new batch of friends who like me for me. Oh, sure, they're not Liza's flunkies, and they can't do the moonwalk, but at least they're sincere. And here's the ironic part: a couple of days ago, I received an invitation to you-know-who's wedding after all. It turns out she had mailed it to my old address, and it had taken the post office a few weeks to forward it to me. Well, all I can say is thanks, Liza, but no thanks. After what you and your friends have put me through, I don't think I could look any of you phonies in the eye. No, I'm going to be spending the evening with Joey Heatherton, Merv Griffin, and K.C. and the Sunshine Band. ♦

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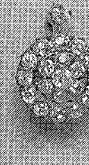
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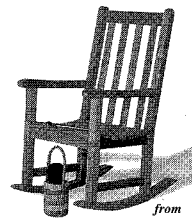
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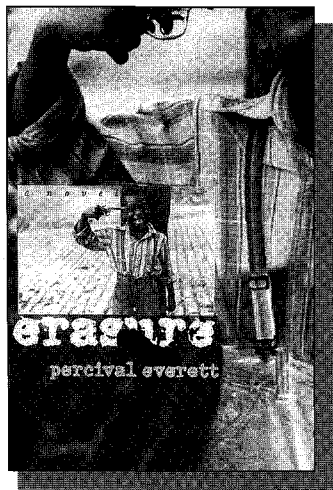


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THE SUPERCOP SCENARIO

Can one man's obsession change the nature of police training?

BY JOE KLEIN

On several chilly nights last November, from ten o'clock until six in the morning, a college campus in Missouri was transformed into an imaginary metropolis, Corps City East, meant to be one of the more dangerous neighborhoods in America. Drama students and off-duty St. Louis undercover police were imported to Mineral Area College, in Park Hills, to play perpetrators; a dispatcher and squad cars were borrowed from local police departments; a block of dormitories was transformed into a low-income housing project. The scenarios came fast at first, and then intermittently, punctuated by long, deep-night lulls. This was the final exam for twenty-five cadets, participants in the Police Corps—a tiny, creative, and unabashedly elite federal program for recent college graduates, who would go on to join police departments throughout Missouri. One persistently careless cadet failed the exercise; a lazy search of a drug suspect was his most serious mistake. (The cadet and three fellow-cadets were "shot" by the perpetrator.) He was asked to leave the program the next day, two days before graduation.

"He'd been a borderline case, but in this program there's no room for borderline. We want our graduates to excel," said Mark Byington, a former Dallas police officer who serves as the Police Corps director in Missouri and looks more like an accountant than a cop. He is short, soft-spoken, and becoming bald; his complexion is perpetually salmon-pink. But he has developed a reputation among the other state Police Corps directors as a particularly skillful trainer.

Byington often works with his cadets at night, when the bulk of police work takes place; he puts them in complicated, unexpected situations where they have to make instinctive judgments on the basis of incomplete information, which may be the most important skill a police officer must have. This class had already been through a weeklong scenario in which

they worked as illegal immigrant farm workers and endured a physical-training regimen called "Hell Week"; each candidate had mentored a child from Missouri's Boys and Girls Town. They had learned to use firearms at night, often in abandoned buildings and confusing circumstances, with trainers shooting back at them with tiny paint pellets called "simunitions." Every fourth week, Byington's cadets worked a midnight shift at the academy. "One thing a police officer has to learn," he told me, "is how to sleep during the day, when the neighbors are up and making noise. They don't teach that at most academies."

I spent two midnight shifts with Byington, prowling the Mineral Area campus, watching his cadets handle domestic disputes, traffic stops, wild parties, burglaries. Given the events of September 11th, Byington decided to throw in some hints of terrorist activity: there was an anthrax scare the first night and a bombing the second.

Two cadets, Jonathan Brown and Mike Strong, responded—gingerly—to the anthrax call. The door of the apartment was slightly open, and they could see two people on the floor and a plastic bag with white powder spilling out. They called the dispatcher, who told them to wait for the HAZMAT team.

"This is frustrating," said Brown, who was sweating even though a stiff, cold wind was blowing, as one of the victims on the floor began to moan. "Maybe we should go on in and help them."

"They told us to wait," said Strong. "But if this isn't anthrax I'm going to feel pretty guilty."

The next morning, Byington criticized Brown and Strong. "You had two people suffering there and you did nothing," he said. "I don't care what the dispatcher told you—you should have acted on your instincts. They could have passed out for any reason. The white powder could have been cocaine. And anthrax is



Graduates of the Maryland Police Corps—a law-enforcement equivalent of the Peace Corps. Photograph by Mark Asnin.

treatable. Your first duty as police officers is to save lives, to protect people—and you didn't do that."

Jonathan Brown, who received the Top Cadet award for his class a few days later, sat staring into his lap, exhausted and depressed. "He's really hard on himself," Byington told me. "But he won't make that mistake again."

Policing is a notoriously inbred line of work. It is at once local—there are no national, and few state, standards—and universal: police officers tend to share a dark fraternal sensibility. They are natural pessimists, convinced that they stand on the sane middle ground between the lawless on the streets and the law-obsessed in the courts, and they have an equal disdain for both. They assume that outsiders are incapable of understanding what they do. There is, furthermore, the conviction

that it is impossible to prepare for this work. The standard greeting a rookie police officer receives from his veteran partner is "Forget everything you learned in the academy."

The idea of a Police Corps, a law-enforcement equivalent of the Peace Corps, in which men and women would be asked to spend a few idealistic years bringing civilization to the constabulary, seems the height of do-gooder foolishness to many in the police community. Indeed, the very fact that such a program exists—that it was funded by Congress and implemented, albeit reluctantly, by the Department of Justice—is attributable to the unrelenting thirty-year crusade of one man: Adam Walinsky, who served as an aide to Robert Kennedy, and who envisioned the Police Corps as both the fulfillment of Kennedy's legacy and his own tribute to a beloved boss.

Walinsky's notion was to take the basic idea of R.O.T.C. (offering college students scholarship money in return for service) and apply it to policing, which, he reasoned, required at least as much skill, dedication, and training as the military. He proposed a real commitment: a rigorous twenty-four-week residential training program, followed by four years of service as police officers. This seemed reasonable enough, but the initial resistance was, and in some cases remains, intense; most of the largest police departments, including New York's, believe that the training that they provide is fine as it is. "I was never a big fan of the idea," William Bratton, the former police commissioner in Boston and New York, told me. "Walinsky was proposing a generic academy, and there's so much training that's specific to the city in question that I figured we'd have to put the

Police Corps cadets through our academy after they graduated from that training, so what was the point?"

Perhaps because of such doubts, the program, which was funded by Congress in 1996, started slowly and remains small: thirty states and territories are now involved, but some of them haven't yet begun training and those that have typically produce a single class each year, usually about twenty cadets. There are only about twelve hundred Police Corps participants serving in local police departments or in training nationally. And yet the program is beginning to have a significant impact on the way police officers are trained in many states; perhaps more important, Police Corps graduates have performed very well on the street in the most stressful circumstances. Though no formal study has been done yet to assess their efficacy, they have been enthusiastically received in the departments they've joined.

Adam Walinsky has a shaved head and a fierce brow, and he works out each morning as if he were a Police Corps recruit himself. His natural tone of voice is a harangue; his life is a perpetual melodrama—he can seem portentous, in a rather threatening way, even when describing a work of art. At the merest provocation, he will rage against television ("Everything it touches it ruins!"), rock music, the lack of teamwork in pro-

fessional basketball, and the moral character of just about anyone who has ever disagreed with him. His Old Testament style—the pessimistic certainty of the prophet Jeremiah comes to mind—has offended, at one time or another, practically everyone he has encountered. "Adam could offend Mother Teresa, two years after she died," said Congressman Barney Frank, of Massachusetts, who joined with former Congressman Bob Dornan, of California, to co-sponsor the Police Corps legislation, in one of Washington's least likely political partnerships. (In the Senate, too, Walinsky's advocates were ecumenical: Democrats Ted Kennedy and John Kerry; Republicans Trent Lott and Bob Dole.)

"Parris Island was one of the most important experiences of my life," Walinsky told me recently, referring to his basic training in the Marine Corps, which he entered after graduating from Cornell University and before attending Yale Law School. Walinsky, who is sixty-five, spoke in a dramatic whisper, sitting in the sunroom of his Westchester home. "It taught me that even when you're convinced you cannot stay awake for another minute, when you feel that you don't have the strength to lift a single piece of paper or walk another step, you can still carry a sixty-pound pack and a rifle on an all-night march. I learned how little of our capabilities most people ever touch. I would never have survived

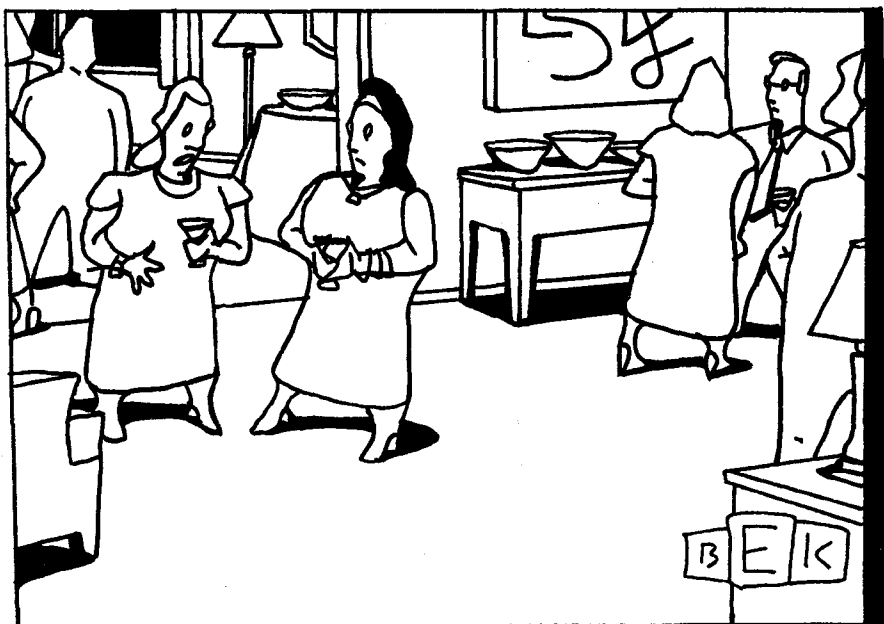
my years with Robert Kennedy—the hundred-and-ten-hour workweeks we had—if I hadn't survived Parris Island."

We met at Walinsky's home because he doesn't have an office. He has no official title and no salary. In the seven years since he resigned as a partner with the New York law firm of Kronish, Lieb, Weiner & Hellman, he has devoted all his energies to the Police Corps, supporting his commitment with personal savings and a few small foundation grants. "Cops are incredibly suspicious people," he explained. "The first question was always 'What's in it for you?' To get my foot in the door, I had to convince them that it wasn't some financial scam."

Walinsky's willingness to sacrifice for a cause comes as no surprise to those who've known him the longest. "Bob had enormous respect for Adam," said Frank Mankiewicz, who served as Robert Kennedy's press secretary. "We all did. Peter Edelman and Adam were Bob's two top aides in the Senate. Peter was calm, rational, the domestic-policy and legislative-strategy guy. Adam was brilliant, an intellectual, the foreign-policy expert and the chief speechwriter. He was the guy who convinced me the war in Vietnam was wrong."

A poster hung above Walinsky's desk in those days: "If shit were gold," it read, in Spanish, "the poor wouldn't have assholes." He believed, as most members of Kennedy's staff did, that he was involved in a higher calling than mere politics. His attachment to the Senator was unwavering—a successful speechwriter tends to internalize not just his boss's cadences but also his sensibility—and his devotion seemed only to grow after Kennedy's death. Walinsky spent the next two decades searching for a politician who combined Kennedy's distinctive, little-guy toughness, intelligence, and compassion. Ted Kennedy, George McGovern, Mario Cuomo, and Bill Bradley were among those who auditioned for the role, seeking Walinsky's advice, but rarely taking it. Gradually, Walinsky forgot about politicians and began to concentrate on the Police Corps, a program that seemed to incorporate all the grand words that he'd packed into Kennedy's speeches: youth, service, idealism, courage, honor, and rigor.

After Robert Kennedy was assassinated, in 1968, Walinsky came home to



"You can't judge a book by its content."

New York and ran for attorney general against the Republican incumbent, Louis Lefkowitz; given his diplomatic skills, Walinsky never had a chance. But he did gain an education: he met David Durk and Frank Serpico, the police officers whose anti-corruption campaign forced the Knapp Commission's investigation of the New York Police Department in 1971. Durk was a graduate of Amherst College whose desire for public service led him to become a patrolman, and he was the first of several college-educated police officers who worked closely with Walinsky. "One of the models for the Police Corps was Paul Douglas," Walinsky told me. "In 1941, he was forty-nine years old and a distinguished economist at the University of Chicago. When the war began, he enlisted as a private in the Marines. He received battlefield promotions to lieutenant colonel and he was wounded at Peleliu. After the war, he became a United States senator. I believed the police desperately needed that sort of person."

Walinsky hoped that his dream would finally be realized when Bill Clinton was elected President, in 1992. But Clinton chose to support his own notion of national service: the broader, less strenuous idea of AmeriCorps (which was later embraced by George W. Bush). Worse, there was an obvious lack of enthusiasm for the Police Corps within Clinton's Justice Department. "Adam came in and spent a few hours with Janet Reno," said Philip Heymann, a Harvard law professor who knew Walinsky during the Kennedy years and who served, briefly, as Reno's deputy attorney general. "When they came out of the meeting, she looked like she was ready to kill him. Adam spotted me, dashed over, and gave me a big bear hug—which hardly extended my tenure in the Justice Department."

"We were not very enthusiastic about Adam's proposal," Heymann went on. "It seemed too class-based. It looked like it was going to try to superimpose an élite college corps from a different economic class on the police and thereby change their behavior. That didn't seem very wise, or plausible, and so we didn't support it."

As it happened, Heymann's concern was misplaced: not many "élite" sorts have volunteered for the Police Corps—

most of the recruits come from working- and middle-class backgrounds and have graduated from state colleges with the intention of making their careers in law enforcement. But the class argument was one of a constellation of objections to Walinsky's plan. "We opposed the Police Corps, and continue to oppose it," Dan Rosenblatt, the executive director of the International Association of Chiefs of Police, said, "because we believe that money could be better spent providing scholarships for existing officers who want to get a college education."

The Clinton Administration's priority, according to Bruce Reed, a former domestic-policy director, was to put as many police on the streets as soon as possible: a hundred thousand officers was the goal. Walinsky's idea was unproven. No one knew if college students even wanted to become police officers or if police departments would accept them; at the very least, an extended period of testing and training would be required.

Even when the program was authorized, as part of the 1994 Crime Bill, another year would pass before money was appropriated for it—ten million dollars for the first year. And the Clinton team had become no more supportive of the program; in fact, a General Accounting Office study in 2000 found that the Justice Department had devoted insufficient resources to getting it started. Indeed, the Police Corps had serious recruiting problems in its first few years. "The economy was so strong that not many people wanted to become police officers," said Kathleen Kennedy Townsend, the lieutenant governor of Maryland and Robert Kennedy's oldest child, who successfully campaigned to make Maryland the first Police Corps state.

Walinsky concentrated his efforts in Baltimore, where Thomas Frazier, who was police commissioner at the time, was an enthusiastic supporter of the idea. In 1995, Walinsky spent six months asking veteran Baltimore cops about their work: what qualities they wanted in a partner, what sort of training a police officer should receive. He did this under the auspices of the Fraternal Order of Police, the nation's largest police union. "I was leery of Adam at first," Gary McLhinney, the president of the F.O.P. local in Baltimore, said. "But he offered us input, which was something the Bal-

timore Police Department never did. I put together some focus groups with officers who were regarded by their peers as outstanding. A detective named James Harlee broke the ice when he stood up and said, 'No one ever taught us how to talk to people. That might be a good thing to learn.' Another fellow said, 'We've never been taught how to use our hands—how to actually handle a suspect.'"

When asked what he learned from the Baltimore cops, Walinsky pounded his chest with his fist. "That it's all in here. It's all about heart," he said. "This was the moment when the Police Corps was really born. These guys knew that something had gone very wrong with policing. I remember one extremely tough African-American officer said to me, 'The real problem here is cowardice. People are scared of these big black guys they see on the street. How are you going to deal with that?'"

That was the nub of the problem with most police training. "Most academies had class eight to four, five days a week. They taught them some basic skills," Walinsky said. "They taught them to shoot. They taught them to drive. They taught them the penal code. In some departments there weren't even any physical-fitness standards. They didn't teach them how to think, how to act under pressure. We decided that it was more important to train for character than for skills."

Police Corps cadets would live in dormitories, without television or telephones. There would be military discipline and physical conditioning. But there would be an equally intensive urban-sociology component: the cadets would have to mentor inner-city children and learn how to talk to the people whose neighborhoods they would be protecting. Four years later, Walinsky's ideas remain the staples of the Police Corps program, but the training has become far more innovative and sophisticated. Even Walinsky admits, "The training the first few classes received was dreadful. The only reason the program succeeded was the quality of the recruits."

The first Police Corps class was convened on August 31, 1997. It consisted of twenty-eight recruits from Maryland and sixteen from South Car-



"I'm on Fendi and Prada, and heading toward Louis."

olina. On the first day, the class was suffering through an arduous session of calisthenics called a "smoker" when an extremely overweight cadet from South Carolina began to falter. "We were doing pushups," Martin Bartness, a member of that class who is now assigned to the Baltimore Police drug-enforcement section, recalled. "We could see the big guy wasn't going to make it, and all of a sudden Brian Pearson"—a fellow-cadet—"literally puts the guy on his back and does the pushups for him. Now, Brian almost became a professional boxer. He can hold me down with one arm—and I'm pretty strong. But we didn't know that then. We just saw him do this amaz-

ing, selfless thing. The message was: We're all going to get through this together. The bond we developed was incredibly strong, and it still is."

Pearson is now a member of Baltimore's Quick Response Team (the local name for SWAT) and spent much of last fall training the latest Maryland Police Corps class. He is a quiet redhead, a graduate of East Stroudsburg University of Pennsylvania, who manages, somehow, to seem simultaneously imposing and unassuming. After graduation from the Police Corps academy, Pearson was assigned to foot patrol in Baltimore's Western district, which is widely regarded as the toughest in town. "Every-

one in the department was skeptical when we came out of the academy," Pearson told me over dinner in a downtown hotel recently, after noting that he hadn't had many sit-down meals during his three years on patrol. "The veterans thought we were preppies sent in to rat them out. The word was 'Don't do anything around the college kids. Don't talk to the college kids.'"

The Western district is a bleak, treeless expanse, studded with abandoned town houses and populated by an astonishing number of heroin addicts. (The Health Department estimates that eight per cent of Baltimore's six hundred thousand residents are addicted to some drug or other.) Pearson and Todd Corriveau, who had also graduated with the first Police Corps class, quickly gained a reputation for aggressiveness. "We made an immediate impact," Pearson told me. "We were making twenty, thirty arrests a month, mostly drugs." (Though no statistics are kept, several Baltimore police officials told me that the average patrol officer makes eight to twelve arrests per month.) "We were making so many arrests that one of the local drug gangs put a hit out on us. Homicide flooded the area and nothing ever came of the death threat. We just continued to do our covert stuff, hiding in abandoned buildings, dumpsters, alleys. The dealers were so busy looking for patrol cars, they usually didn't see us coming. And we spent a lot of our off-duty hours going to community meetings, helping out in any way we could."

On the morning of July 14, 1998, Pearson and Corriveau were returning to their post after making a drug arrest when a woman ran up to them to report a fire.

In Baltimore, only firefighters are supposed to enter burning buildings; the police manage crowd control and emergency services outside. But when Pearson and Corriveau saw flames and thick black smoke pouring from the three-story brick row house they didn't hesitate. "Brian just ran through the front door," Corriveau recalled. "As soon as I saw that, I went in, too. I took two men out from the first floor while Brian went upstairs. I tried to join him, but the place was just engulfed in smoke. He could have died up there. Lucky there was a fire escape."

Pearson took five people, including three children, out from the second floor.

His bravery was celebrated in the Baltimore *Sun* the next day, but there were mixed emotions among some of his superiors. "There was this desk sergeant," Pearson told me reluctantly. "He hated the Police Corps. I came in, filthy with smoke, my uniform burned, and he starts yelling at me for not waiting for the fire-fighters. 'That was really stupid, Pearson,' he said." But attitudes changed after the story appeared in the newspapers.

The first Maryland Police Corps class recently finished its four years of mandatory service. Of the twenty-eight graduates, twenty-four decided to remain with the Baltimore Police Department; sixteen have moved into specialized units. "I can show up at a crime scene and pick out the officers who have had Police Corps training, just by the look of them," Ed Norris, the current police commissioner, said. "I wish I'd gotten training like this twenty years ago, when I went through the New York academy."

Norris is a gruff, outer-borough sort whose natural state seems to be a slightly flustered distraction. He is a protégé of the late Jack Maple, the flamboyant police strategist who helped transform the New York Police Department in the nineties. "Here, look at this," Norris said, suddenly popping out from behind his desk and pulling a volume from the bookcase. It was a book called "Street Cops," published in 1981. "Look at these guys!" He shook his head. "I love 'em. A lot of them were, and are, great cops. But look at them."

They looked like the Beatles of "Sgt. Pepper" vintage: long hair, goofy smiles, dishevelled uniforms. "Things have changed in the past twenty years. Cops have come a long way," the Commissioner said. "But not far enough—not in the way they look, or think, or interact with the public, and certainly not in the way they are trained. I really think the Police Corps is the next step."

Norris recently decided to have the entire Baltimore Police Department retrained in arrest-and-control procedures developed for the Police Corps by Lew Hicks, a former Navy SEAL, who has been the target of some criticism himself. In fact, the perils of Lew Hicks are emblematic of the Police Corps's. Adam Walinsky met Hicks at an arrest-and-control demonstration that Hicks was

conducting in the mid-nineties, and the two men—equally combustible, equally opinionated—hit it off. "We talked for hours," Hicks recalled. "As soon as Adam told me about the Police Corps, I just sensed that this was what the Lord intended me to do."

Hicks is a small man with light-green eyes who seems to be propelled forward by the tilt of his shoulders. He began to moonlight as an arrest-and-control instructor before he retired from the SEALs, in 1998; his most avid students tended to be police officers. He even starred in a video that became, to his dismay, part of a series called "Pump Up & Kick Ass with the Navy SEALs." Hicks insists that he makes no profit from the video, which was produced by a friend, but its existence is inevitably cited by critics who believe that Hicks's methods are better suited to Afghanistan than to Baltimore.

"I can't believe the pushback on Hicks. It's such bullshit," Norris said. "Hicks's opponents can't even define what it is that they oppose. The problem is, a lot of police chiefs are political. They're afraid of taking risks. They hear 'paramilitary' and they're afraid people will respond to that. They're afraid of the first bad shooting." (In four years on patrol around the country, as far as I can determine, Police Corps graduates have rarely used their weapons. There haven't been any bad shootings.)

Walinsky lobbied to have Hicks installed as the Police Corps trainer in Florida. Hicks spent a contentious three years there. Then, through a company he founded in 1998, he began to offer three-week "train the trainer" courses to Police Corps drill instructors from all over the country. He admits that his training has evolved as he's learned more about policing, but his actual arrest-and-control methods remain the same, and they are not subtle. His system relies on the use of force rather than finesse—gross motor skills as opposed to fine motor skills, says Hicks, who uses an extremely complicated vocabulary (quadratic memory retention; neuro-linguistics; vectors and apexes) to describe a simple way to "control the skeleton."

"I was very skeptical of the military-style training that Walinsky and Hicks were proposing," says Greg Saville, who is the director of the Center for Advanced Public Safety Research at the

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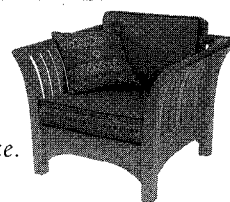
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University of New Haven, and who also served, briefly, as associate director of the Police Corps program in Florida. "When you have young recruits with no knowledge of what police do except what they see on television and you immediately throw them into a boot-camp situation with very rigid controls, punishing physical workouts, and sleep deprivation, that's what they think policing is going to be all about. They become hammers looking for nails, rather than community-oriented problem solvers."

I spent several days watching Hicks work with veteran Baltimore police officers. The sessions were gruelling ("Pain is only weakness leaving your body," he would tell the huffing and wheezing cops), but also quite surprising, given Hicks's belligerent reputation. There were daily classroom discussions of works by Aristotle, George Orwell ("Shooting an Elephant"), and Nicholas Boothman—the last a slim volume titled "How to Make People Like You in Ninety Seconds or Less."

In Utah, a Hicks-related experiment is taking place. The state training director, Sidney Groll, insists that the cadets be taught traditional arrest-and-control procedures; but Ken Betterton, the state Police Corps director, loves the Hicks method. And so both ways are being taught, to the dismay of the cadets. "Why don't you ask them?" Betterton suggested one day. "Ask one of our young ladies which method is better."

I chose Amy Nielsen, a sociology major from the University of Utah, who, after graduating from the Police Corps academy in December, would join the West Valley City Police Department. Cadet Nielson suggested that the most efficacious way to demonstrate the difference between the methods was for me to try to punch her in the face. I did, slowly and gently; Nielsen grabbed my fist and twisted it. "The old way," she said, with a smile.

"It seems pretty effective," I said, wincing.

"Yeah, but what are the chances that I'm going to be able to catch your fist in a real fight—in the dark, in a hallway, on a slippery surface. Not too great. The twisting won't be so easy, either. Now let's try it the Hicks way," Nielsen said.

I threw the punch. She slammed my arm away with her forearm, and as I

turned with the impact she could easily have pushed me down from behind. "This is much simpler," Nielson said. "It's easy to remember. I feel much more confident. This is something I'll be able to take into the street."

If there is a "military" quality to Police Corps training, it is a very specific sort of militarism: the United States Special Forces train much the same way as the Police Corps does, with an emphasis on preparing recruits to lead, make decisions, and deal with the unexpected (as opposed to standard military boot camps, which teach recruits to follow orders). "We teach a skills set," says Colonel Hy Rothstein, a retired Special Forces officer who helped shape the Green Beret training program at Fort Bragg. "But what we are really interested in is teaching people how to think. We want to see how you behave in uncertain situations you haven't been prepared for—and that's what comes out when we run them through scenarios."

The Police Corps training is expensive. The total cost, including scholarship money, training, overhead, and a ten-thousand-dollar annual stipend paid to the departments that hire the graduates, is estimated at about a hundred and thirty thousand dollars per cadet. "It's the only program we have, that I'm aware of, where the states don't make a financial contribution, and that should probably be addressed," said Deborah J. Daniels, who is in charge of the Justice Department's Office of Justice Programs, which supervises the Police Corps. "It's also time to do a real study, to see if all the wonderful anecdotal information we're getting about the Police Corps holds up."

Walinsky believes the program could become a dispersed national university of law enforcement. This summer, for example, the Police Corps will offer a three-week training program for corporals, sergeants, and lieutenants. It seems possible that other urban police departments could eventually follow the lead of Ed Norris in Baltimore and begin to incorporate Police Corps methods into their regular academies. In Utah, Deputy Commissioner of Public Safety Earl Morris told me he was so impressed with the Police Corps that "we've decided to bring all of our

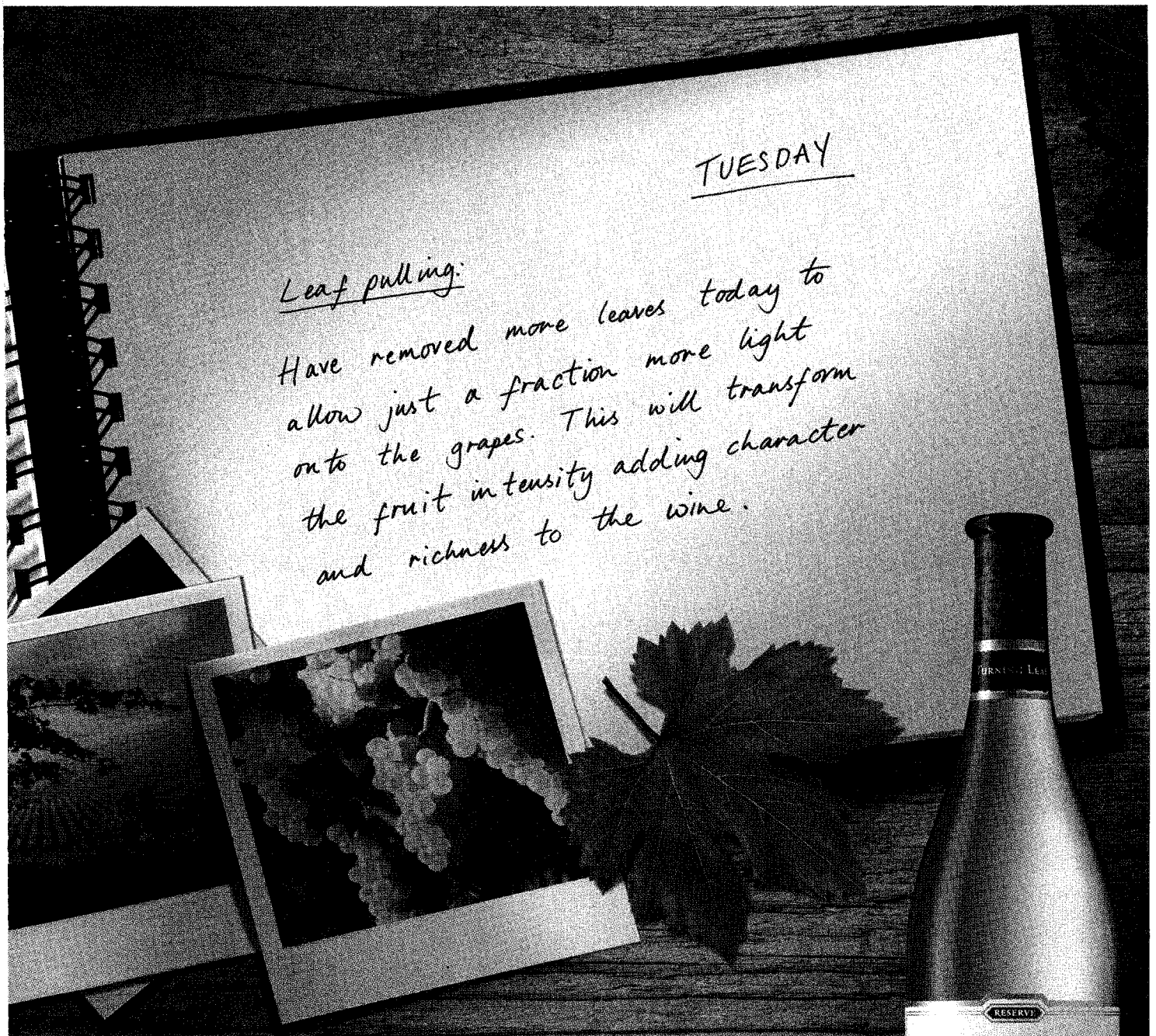
other training programs as close to national Police Corps standards as possible."

On a sunny afternoon last October, Adam Walinsky seemed almost happy as he led the Maryland and Mississippi Police Corps classes to the Kennedy grave site at Arlington National Cemetery and lectured them on the heritage of their program. Walinsky had taken off his blue suit jacket, and his white shirt was blinding in the afternoon sun; as always, his patterned tie was held in place by a PT-109 tie clasp, and he wore his signature tan fedora. He led the fifty cadets—a formidable, neatly dressed group—up the path from John Kennedy's eternal flame to Robert Kennedy's simple grave, where there were two quotations carved in the marble. One was from Kennedy's memorable anti-apartheid speech in South Africa, which Walinsky had written, although he didn't mention that; the other came from extemporaneous remarks Kennedy had made in the Indianapolis ghetto on the night Martin Luther King, Jr., was assassinated, in 1968. Walinsky inevitably tears up when he tells the story, and his voice began to quaver as he read the words aloud: "My favorite poet was Aeschylus," Kennedy had said. "He wrote, 'In our sleep, pain which cannot forget falls drop by drop upon the heart until, in our own despair, against our will, comes wisdom through the awful grace of God.'"

Walinsky paused and gathered himself. "Why is this important to you?" he asked. "Because it speaks directly to the work you will be doing. It conveys the message that almost every person—no matter how scantily educated, no matter how mean or degraded the circumstances they live in—can be spoken to in the noblest language of which the human heart is capable. It speaks directly to the respect you should bring to the people in the communities you serve. This is the tradition to which you are heir."

It was an oddly uncomfortable moment. The message was important, but Walinsky's passion was, as always, disproportionate. He seemed to be waiting for a response from the cadets, hoping for some sort of catharsis. There was none, just an awkward silence. Finally, a woman from the Mississippi class approached to shake his hand. "Thank you," she said, and went back down the hill as the other cadets formed a line behind her. ♦

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“It’s like saying ‘trousers with two legs’ is a design cliché,” John Portman famously responded to sniping critics of his cavernous atriums. But while the esteemed architect may have gone all huffy defending the essential nature of wasted space, don’t we find ourselves going slightly shuddery when faced with clunky design and bland décor when we travel?

It makes us wonder why genuine style, like good manners and well-shaken martinis, is in such short supply on the road. After all, we leave home to find inspiration, not to have our brain cages rattled when design that portentously aspires to lofty cachet swan dives into messy kitsch. Confronted with loopy lobbies, chintz-choked guest rooms, and neon-gone-mad eateries, at times it seems that there’s no such thing as style anywhere there’s a beach or SPF 50 sunblock.

Without meaning to sound “Sex and the City” about it, weren’t fussy inns, boiled meals, and scratchy tweeds great reasons to avoid venturing into the countryside? No matter how desirably remote and rustic those places seemed, weren’t they always a bit short on style?

But that was then. Nowadays, hip owners, chic designers, and CIA-trained chefs have fanned out all around the globe.

fashionable quarters

BY RICHARD J. PIETSCHMANN



courtesy of Nature Encounters, Ltd.

BUSH POSH

Singita, a private game reserve near Kruger National Park, has garnered worldwide attention as a sumptuous locale for a South African safari.

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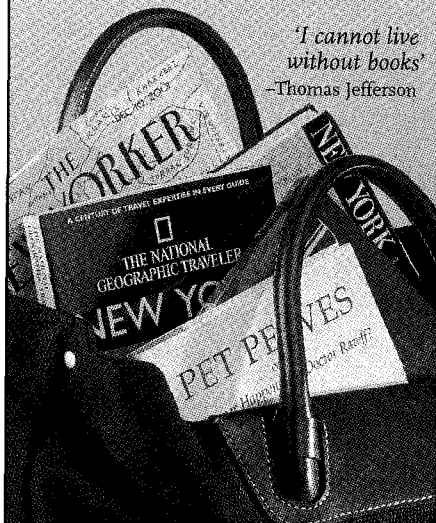
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RUSTIC ÉLAN

Take, for instance, somewhere as remote as South Africa's fabled safari country, where a handful of remarkably sumptuous bush lodges in private game preserves bring high style to the heart of big game country. "It's complete elegance in the bush—Ralph Lauren meeting 'Out of Africa,'" says South Africa-raised Caren Banks, whose **Nature Encounters, Ltd.** (323-733-6622) organizes safaris from her base in Los Angeles.

Exaggerated spaces sprawling beneath dramatically peaked



SOUTH AFRICAN EVOLUTION

(Left and Middle) High above the forest floor, the recently opened Tsala Treetop Lodge

roofs, as well as oversized furniture and fittings such as the thirty-five-foot banquet table and huge copper bathtubs, set the tone at **Ulusaba Private Game Reserve** (www.ulusaba.com) bordering Kruger National Park. Its design exuberance is no doubt explained by the fact that it is one of flamboyant Sir Richard Branson's newest projects.

Bruce Stafford Architects and interior designer Boyd Ferguson set the standard at nearby **Singita Private Game Reserve** (www.singita.co.za). Huge suites, each with a private swimming pool and game-viewing deck, break new ground in

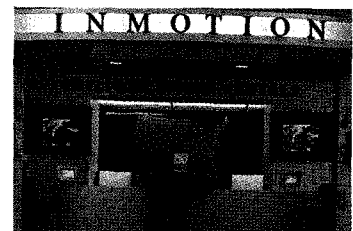
INSIDE INFORMATION

JETPORT DOWNTIME Increased security at airports mandates earlier arrival times. But even if you get lucky and speed through the checkpoints, you can face considerable downtime at the terminal. **InMotion Pictures** (www.inmotionpictures.com) offers DVD rental kiosks at sixteen airports, including Atlanta, San Francisco, and New York's LaGuardia. You can now rent a player and films for pre-flight viewing or tote it with you for in-flight recreation (\$12 a day).

Simply return the rental to a kiosk at your destination airport (or send it back in a prepaid UPS mailer).

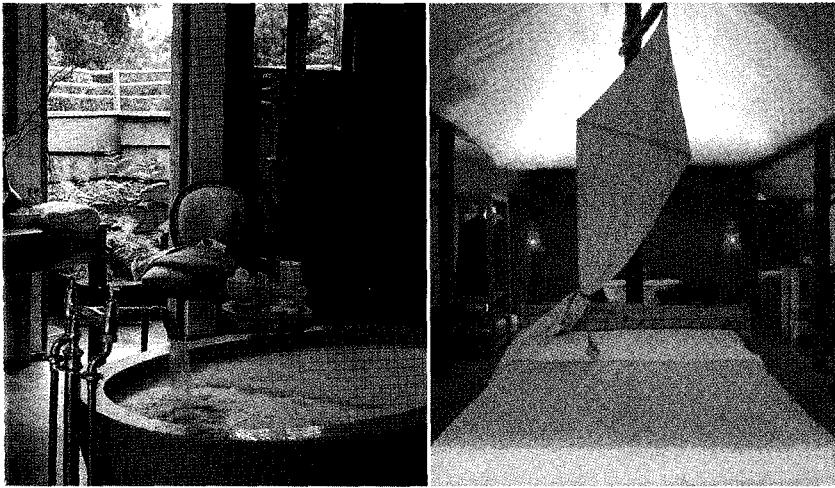
... As one thrifty airline after another terminates their in-flight meals, luxury hotels are picking up the slack by offering gourmet alternatives to fast food on the fly.

The Peninsula Beverly Hills and **The Beverly Hills Hotel** have spearheaded the burgeoning trend by packing tasty entrées and snacks for their airport-bound patrons.



terms of "colonial lush." Singita's original design team was charged with creating a lodge that was unsurpassed in terms of luxury.

Prominent South African architect Jonathan Ridler virtually invented the "spare but spectacular" with his bush palace at **Phinda Private Game Reserve** (www.ccafrica.com), nestled below the Lebombo Mountains. Its glass-walled Forest Lodge is built on low stilts above the forest floor, beneath a canopy of torchwood trees.



imaginatively combines wood, stone, and glass throughout. (Right) The luxury tent experience.

hail to the haute

Baronial life is a given in Great Britain, where grand old estates festoon the countryside. Noted French chef-hotelier Raymond Blanc has turned **Le Manoir aux Quat'Saisons** (800-845-4274), a fifteenth-century Oxford manor house, into a celebrity-haunt. Three years ago, top interior designer Emily Todhunter (Manhattan's Au Bar and Christopher's in London) worked with Blanc on a major renovation. "Gone are heavy chintzes, billowing swags, and over-gilded ornamentation, and in their place is light and comfortable modernity," commented Britain's reigning prince of all things style, Sir Terence Conran.

Bath's **Lucknam Park** (www.lucknampark.co.uk/hotel), a majestic eighteenth-century Georgian pile in the running for best in Britain, has just completed a makeover—from balustrades to chimney pots—courtesy of London's Richard Daniels Design. "We set out to ensure that each room has its own individuality that—although using different fabrics, color schemes, and inspiration—still has common themes of country-house luxury and ambience," says the firm's director, Simon Rowell.

Over in Ireland, American entertainment entrepreneur Merv Griffin is the driving force behind saving County Galway's **St. Clerans** (353-0-91-846555)—the late director John Huston's eighteenth-century, gray-stone country manor house—from near collapse three years ago. Scheduled to open in April, Griffin has transformed it into a hotel, and the refurbishment sets

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out to meld tradition, luxury, and strong modern colors, resulting in, chirped one publication recently, "the atmosphere of an Irish Country House viewed through the prism of Hollywood."

The ever-popular country inns in France have reached such pinnacles of style that they transcend the notion of auberge. Among them, Provence's **Oustau de Baumanière** (www.oustaudebauaniere.com), **Hostellerie de Crillon le Brave** (www.crillonlebrave.com), and **La Bastide de Capelongue** (www.francemarket.com/capelongue) stand out for simple but beautifully designed rooms, gasp-worthy scenery, and food as



FILIPIN BURE IN THE CLOUDS

The hilltop estate of Vale 'O' is part of The Wakaya Club, warmed on all sides by the Pacific.

good as can be found in any tony Paris arrondissement. Then there is tastemaitre Alain Ducasse's **La Bastide de Moustiers** (www.bastide-moustiers.i2m.fr), about sixty miles from Aix-en-Provence, as well as his newer **Hostellerie de l'Abbaye de la Celle** (www.abbaye-celle.com), less than an hour from Marseilles—paragons of Provençal stone farmhouse style (simplicity made luxurious) and the famed chef's sunny cuisine. Meanwhile **Le Moulin de Lourmarin** (www.fitzroyhotel.com), built inside an old olive mill, offers plain rooms but a soaring space dominated by an olive mill. This provides the ambience for young superchef Edouard Loubet's divine restaurant.

TROPO CHIC

Gone are the days when tropical island vacations meant thatched roofs, flea market décor, and questionable food. The thatch is still there, but more as a design component than anything else. And particularly in the South Pacific, under the thatch is often found sublime décor orchestrated by top decorators riffing on the tropical island theme.

The island nation of Fiji is a prime example, with several secluded resorts vying for tops in the tropics. "Unexpected" is the operative word all around, for who could anticipate the clearly Southwestern theme of **Vatulele Island Resort** (800-828-9146)

where Santa Fe-based architect Doug Nelson, aided by visual consultant Susan Woods (co-author of "Santa Fe Style"), has combined lime-washed adobe walls, tiled terraces, and slatted shutters with thirty-foot thatched roofs, tapa cloth hangings, and coral slab tables. **Turtle Island Resort** (877-2-TURTLE), situated on its own private island, boasts purely local Fijian architecture—thatched roofs and native woods—boosted to the highest power, with one of the finest wine cellars in the South Pacific waiting in the wings.

Meanwhile, **Wakaya Club** (800-828-FIJI), a private island resort often called the world's most exclusive, masks its appeal to exposure-shy celebrities and titans behind a façade of rustic simplicity. If simplicity is a virtue, this place has enough to rise into the heavens—with its lava-rock outdoor showers, Tibetan rugs, Indonesian sculpture, floors made from rare, beautiful yaka wood, Nina Campbell-designed fabrics, and king-sized, four-poster beds with posh Yves Delorme linens.

Finally, Mill Valley, California-based interior designer Janet Gay Freed devised the bold *bures* (bungalows) at oceanographer Jean-Michel Cousteau's **Fiji Islands Resort** (800-246-3454), where the living is as good as the diving. Working from the inspiration of a fallen banana leaf's reds, greens, browns, and cobalt blues, Freed assembled iridescent interiors accented by custom-made Philippe Starck lamps, locally made furniture, and hand-

thrown, urn-like sinks.

Not far away, in the French corner of the South Pacific, a platoon of architects and designers have turned tiny Bora Bora, widely considered the most photogenic tropical island in the world, into a place where the ultimate can be found. By far the greatest contributor to this Polynesian fantasy is the sumptuously outfitted bungalow supported on stilts above translucent lagoons.



courtesy of The Wakaya Club

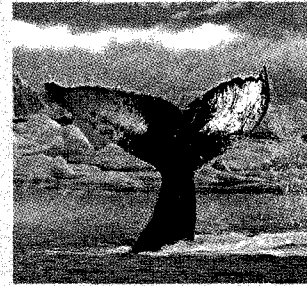


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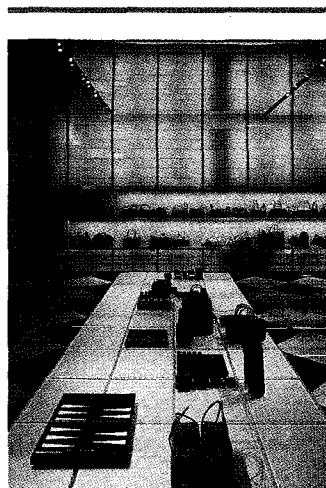
More than three hundred of these *fares* (as they call them in Tahitian) are divided among the small island's several posh resorts. One of the most spectacular among these is the **Hotel Bora Bora** (www.amanresorts.com), where interiors are fashioned in lush South Pacific colonial style, with hardwood flooring, red-cedar siding, and claw-foot bathtubs. Another resort is **Le Meridien Bora Bora** (www.lemeridien-borabora.com), where paintings from Matisse's three years in Tahiti provided inspiration for architect Jean-Hughes Tricard and interior designer Didier Lefort (who worked exclusively for the Aga Khan for a dozen years).

aussie outré

Oz doesn't often pop up when chitchat turns to classy tropical islands. More's the pity, given the passel of them in and near the Great Barrier Reef off of Queensland, on Australia's northeastern coast. Perhaps most familiar for its striking architecture—a steeply raked low-rise curling around a palm-studded lagoon—is the resort, **Hayman Island** (www.hayman.com.au). Last year, it received an extensive renovation with Chhada Siembieda

Australia ratcheting up the interior's panache with soft natural textures, cool marble, and rich woods to complement the breathtaking setting. **Bedarra Island** (800-225-9849), a luxe fifteen-villa resort, recently got a refurbishment that streamlined the décor and added natural materials such as volcanic stone, ironbark, and recycled Australian hardwoods to the Queensland-casual design scheme.

On the same island, Terry and Robert Schwamberg (known for their hip, Kirketon and Medusa boutique hotels in Sydney) have branched out to bring chic, home-style living to the Great Barrier Reef. Their methodology: to discover underused prime residential properties and give them a modernist appeal. Using this formula, they, along with noted interior designer Ian Moore of Engelen Moore, created a pair of bright, luxurious hideaways—Bedarra Island Villa and Bedarra Island Studio. The Studio was formerly used by the famous Australian artist, Noel Wood. Both properties share a private beach with stunning views of the Coral Sea.



INSIDE INFORMATION

GOTHAM CHIC The stylish new 24,500-square-foot **Prada** flagship store (at the former Soho Guggenheim) designed by Dutch architect Rem Koolhaas and the

Office for Metropolitan Architecture features an artsy wave of zebrawood flooring (skateboarders verboten), cylindrical glass elevator, and video-based ("magic") dressing room mirrors for a 360-degree look-see. With new forms of customer interaction like "ubiquitous displays," the fashion fantasyland has an array of in-store technologies designed to enhance customer service.

the lei of the land

Cutting-edge design is more easily found on Maui than on any of the other Hawaiian islands. Bowing in a few months from now, the legendary **Hotel Hana-Maui** (800-321-4262) has been undergoing a thorough renovation by the same company that made California's Post Ranch Inn and Jean-Michel Cousteau's Fiji Islands Resort synonyms for refined chic in idyllic settings. Lead designer/decorator Hunton Conrad of Maui and California design consultant Janet Gay Freed are using traditional *kapa* (pounded wood bark), plantation house themes and

colors, and teak furniture made from old Thai farm carts to provide the design cues.

Authentic Hawaii, stylishly updated, is found at **Old Wailuku Inn at Ulupono** (800-888-6100), where three newly opened rooms sport ohia wood floors, as well as Hawaiian quilts and bed coverings by Sig Zane, Hawaii's top fabric designer. The plantation-era themes were inspired by the beloved works of Don Blanding, Hawaii's poet laureate in the nineteen-twenties and thirties.

Elsewhere around the island, truly monumental design prevails at **Grand Wailea Resort** (888-6100). The grounds are so dazzling, it's easy to overlook the massive but whimsical Botero sculptures in the courtyard of the open-air lobby, or the intelligent interior design by prominent Los Angeles decorator Barbara Barry.

California überchef Wolfgang Puck is behind the scenes at **Four Seasons Resort Maui at Wailea** (800-819-5053), with its spectacular new **Spago** (808-879-2999) overlooking Wailea Beach. The signature restaurant of the top-dog resort was transformed by the Engstrom Design Group. Another stylish surrounding for dining is local chef-entrepreneur James MacDonald's waterfront **PO** (808-661-8422) in Lahaina, where the hand-poured concrete bar and spider light fixtures prove that innovative Hawaiian design isn't an oxymoron.

AMERICAS EDGE

Kudos to California for finally getting the country inn thing right, with tons of style but no shared baths or treacherous tchotchkes. There is, for example, a virtual anti-B. and B. in the stylish new **Duchamp** (800-431-9341) at the outskirts of Healdsburg in the heart of Sonoma wine country. Dubbed "Soho in Sonoma" by *Elle*, Pat and Peter Lenz's witty homage to the French Dadaist artist is a thoroughly contemporary collection of suites and cottages, all designed and decorated by sculptor Pat, with a keen eye to art. The whole is complemented by a fifty-foot lap pool. And though **Gaige House** (800-935-0237) in Glen Ellen may look at first like your



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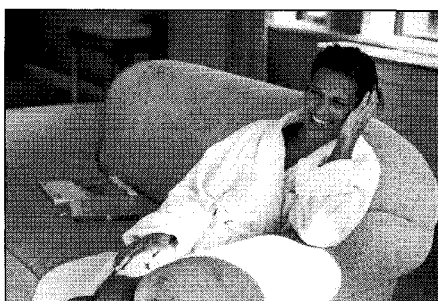
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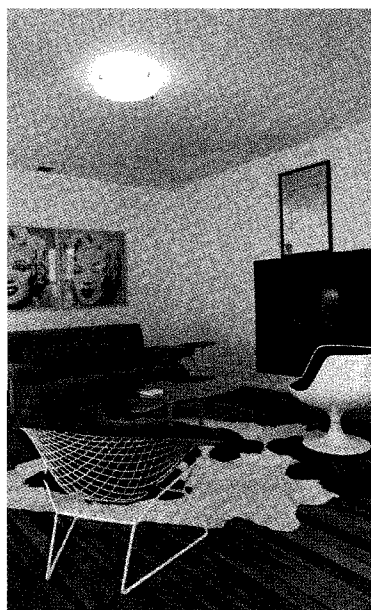
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courtesy of the Duchamp Hotel

HOMAGE TO DADA

The contempo Duchamp in Sonoma has been
lauded as one of the world's top new hotels.

standard-issue Queen Anne B. and B., inside the Indonesian themes are as far from cutesy prints and country kitsch as an inn can get. The new Creekside and Woodside rooms take style even further with modern Japanese flourishes like two-person showers and soaking tubs.

Nothing, however, can beat **Chateau Du Sureau** (www.chateau-dusureau.com), nestled in a little visited part of the state, just outside Yosemite National Park. In the unlikely location of Oakhurst, the Vienna-born proprietress and chef, Erna Kubin-Clanin, has created a nine-acre sanctuary known as "The Estate by the Elderberries," a veritable fairytale of French countryside architecture that includes a ten-bedroom chateau and a newly built two-room villa the likes of which may not

exist anywhere. Lovingly decorated in French Empire style, the estate is furnished with only the finest nineteenth-century antiques. That it also has one of the best restaurants in all of central California, with Robert Riescher presiding as its executive chef, makes Kubin-Klanin's enclave a middle-of-nowhere dream come true.

Tucked away in our own Northeast are two of the finest, most exclusive country inns anywhere. **The Point** (800-255-3530), said to be "Good enough for the Rockefellers," is William Avery Rockefeller's former Great Camp on the shores of



courtesy of The Point

THE POINT OF IT ALL

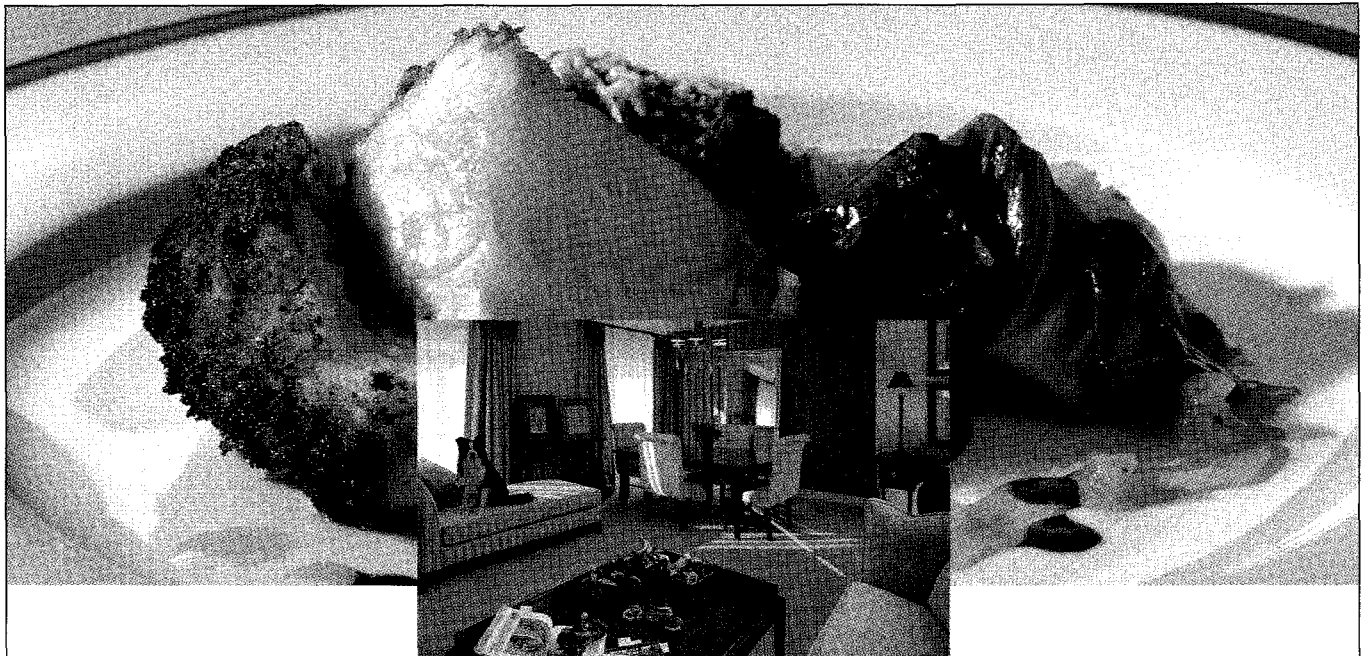
'Roughing it' at Adirondack compound, The Point, affords solitude in splendor.

New York's Upper Saranac Lake. Guests live the rustic life of multimillionaires past, who once flocked to the Adirondacks to sleep in log-sided lodges and stomp through the woods in clothes they fancied as casual (while liveried servants trailed behind). Eleven luxurious guest quarters are spread among the resort's four buildings.

Much the same privileged atmosphere, minus formal dinner attire, prevails in the hills of Barnard, Vermont at **Twin Farms** (802-234-9999). This most stylish of inns occupies a three hundred-acre estate that was once Sinclair Lewis and Dorothy Thompson's summer home. It was transformed into a New England idyll by landscape architect Dan Kiley and New York society decorator, the late Jed Johnson, who filled the cottage interiors with rugs from Guatemala and paintings by Hockney, Lichtenstein, and others.

hotbeds of high style

Anyone who thinks stylish doesn't exist south of the border should check out little Zihuatanejo, a sleepy fishing village on Mexico's Pacific Coast just up the coast from Acapulco. There's a major international airport just a few miles away at Ixtapa. On a protected bay sheltering the best beach in the region, a German and a Frenchman have created two seaside inns that radiate chic the way the ever



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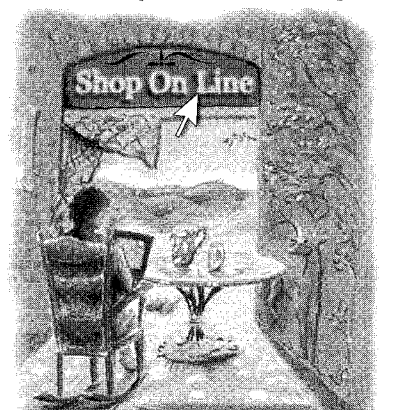
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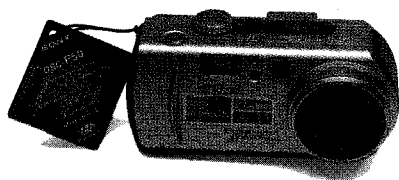
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(L.A.-based writer Richard J. Pietschmann has contributed to *Departures*, *Travel + Leisure*, *Bon Appétit*, and *Tennis* magazines.)

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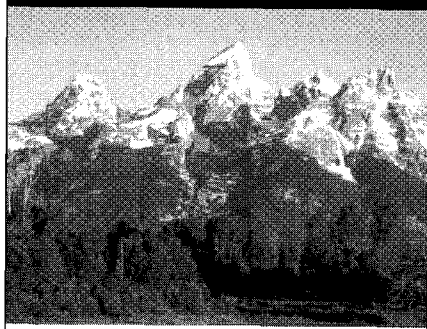


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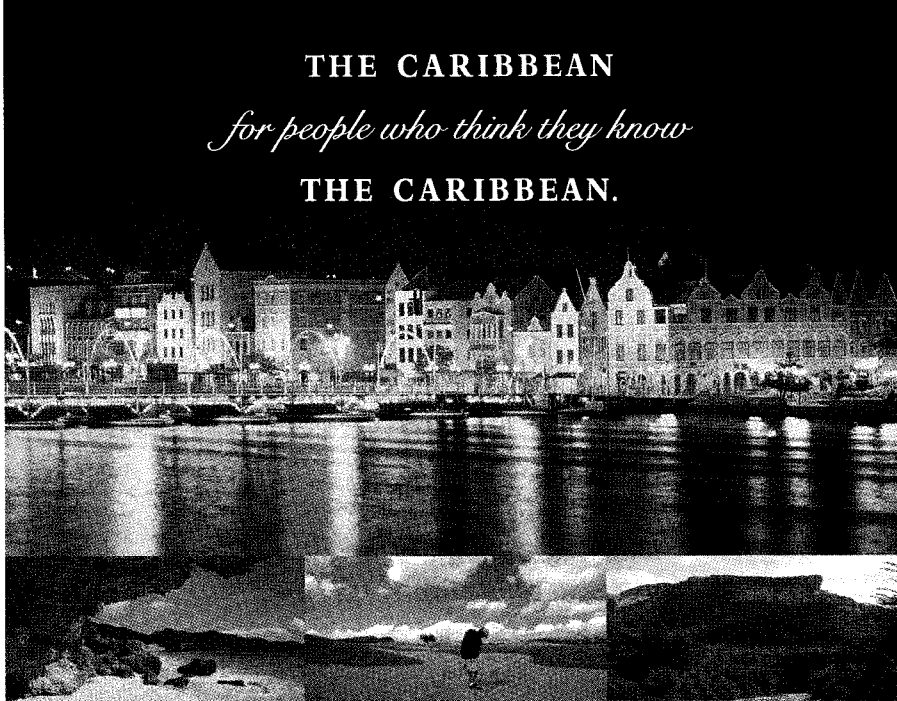
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—Dan Ouellette

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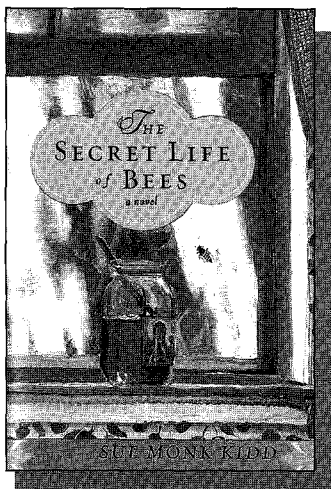
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TILDA MOMENTS

Tracking the elusive anti-star.

BY HILTON ALS

This is what happens. A young woman wearing a white lab coat is sitting in a cafeteria, keeping her thoughts to herself, when a man carrying a tray sits down across from her. Striking up a conversation, he tells the woman—her name is Joyce—that he recognizes her from years before; they grew up in the same small Canadian town. Joyce then feels obliged to tell the man a little bit about herself. She teaches neurology at a nearby university. Her demeanor is polite, formal, distant. She doesn't smile much; you can tell that she's one of those extremely self-contained people who regard smiling—the baring of teeth—as a form of aggression. Outside, the rain falls in sheets. At one point, the man tells Joyce that she's very beautiful. She says, "Oh, please," and her irritation casts a pall on the conversation. Still, the man presses on. He says, "You should have been a model." Joyce says, "Well, that's the last thing I would want to do." When he asks her whether she could ever imagine being something other than herself, she says, "No. . . . When people think of their lives as being different, they always make the most trivial changes. 'If only I'd been to that party, or taken that job.' They never say, 'If only I'd had two brains, or been able to photosynthesize my food.' It's as if they think the smaller changes are more likely to have occurred, that God might have overlooked them. How could anything be different from what it is?"

Fiction, as someone once said, is always true. As played by Tilda Swinton in the Canadian director Robert LePage's 2000 feature "Possible Worlds," Joyce is one of Swinton's numerous selves. More specifically, Joyce is the part of Swinton's self that works to subvert the standard male response to her considerable beauty ("You should have been a model") with analytical,

imaginative, and precise language—to put the watcher in the position of being watched by the very person his vision sought to claim. It is this aspect of Swinton's presence, in two dozen films (and one music video)—her witty, sometimes eerie ability to turn the screen on the viewer, as it were—that has made her quite possibly the only real film star whose career has been fostered almost exclusively by the art house and the *cinéaste*. In the eighties and early nineties, in film after film by the late, pioneering English director Derek Jarman, Swinton became the avant-garde's Garbo, a manifestation of ideas in the flesh. "But that kind of art is dead," she said not long ago. The film industry takes less and less interest in the kinds of talent that Swinton encountered and, in many cases, promoted at the beginning of her career. "What you can do now," she said, "is subvert with art that disguises itself as commerce."

Recently, Swinton has pursued this goal in several roles: as a protective mother in "The Deep End," a less-than-two-million-dollar art film with a seemingly accessible narrative, which was picked up by Fox Searchlight; as an oracle of sorts in Cameron Crowe's "Vanilla Sky"; as a peculiarly idealistic studio executive in Spike Jonze's forthcoming "Adaptation"; and as the love object of the heartthrob Ewan McGregor in an erotic film noir, "Young Adam," which begins shooting in Glasgow this month. But, a dreamer in pursuit of a dream, she cannot relinquish her roots, despite the hard work and scant financial remuneration, and she still takes on parts farther from the mainstream, in films like Lynn Herschman Leeson's upcoming "Teknolust," in which she plays three clones who must drain men of their sperm in order to survive. Collectively, Swinton's current choice of roles reflects the schism

between the art film and the populist epic. She is the object that each camp—one headed by *The Artist* and the other by *The Businessman*—struggles to capture, because of what she confers: power to the former, credibility to the latter. She manages to offer both while seeming to do nothing at all—the stillness of her face convey-

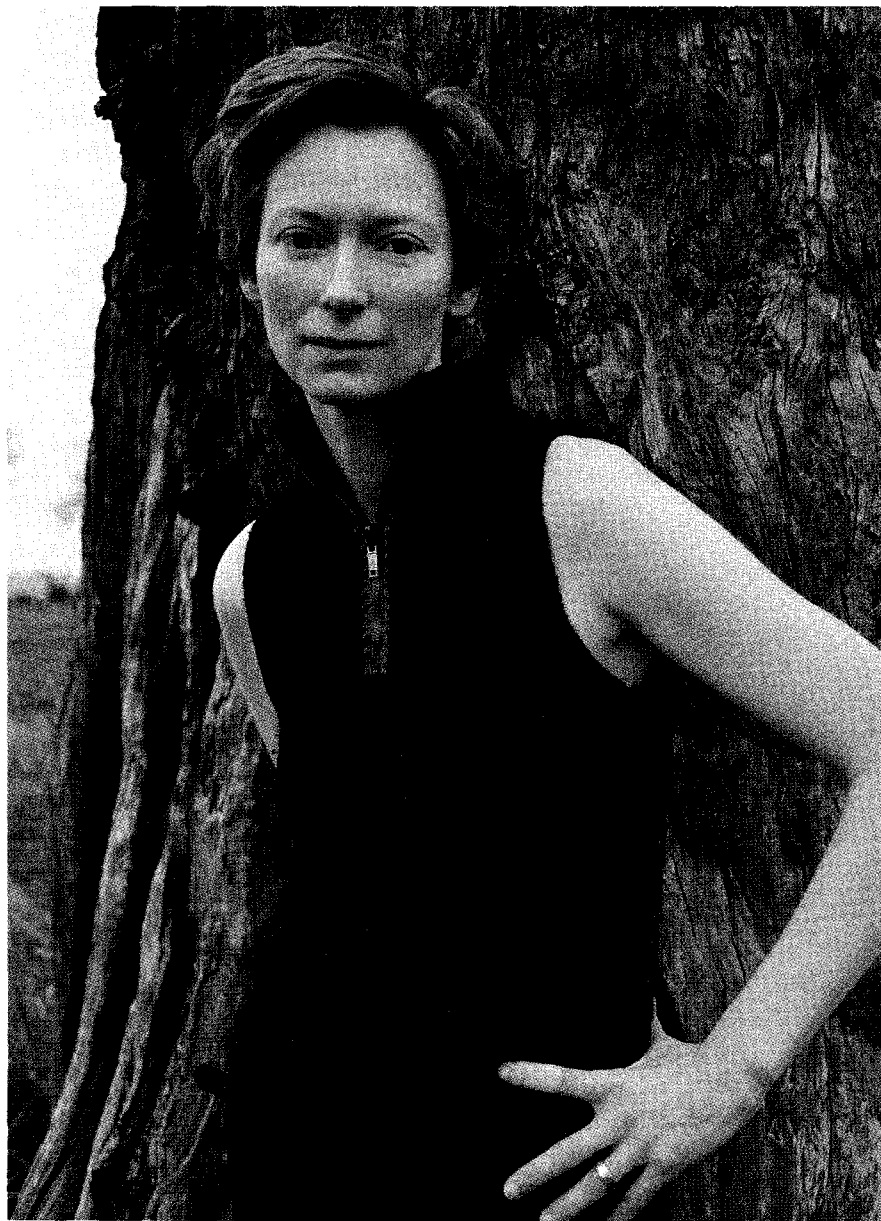
whose “I” is not the point. Marrying her image to the audience’s imagination is the sleight-of-hand to which she aspires. She has an interest in the closeup. “What insight it provides,” she said last December. “How many of us can ever say we’ve seen the emotion in the *backs* of our heads?” Yet she is detached enough from her work to describe her

it was perhaps an imitation of Eve’s voice, which conveyed Eve’s will—the strength that kept her ankles from wobbling in heels that were sharp enough to stab, if not kill, anything underfoot, be it flowers or men. In the film, Eve’s vulnerability soon became evident in spite of those heels and the lipstick glossy with deceit—war paint that armed her for the struggle to be a woman in a nearly all-male world, the only game in town.

Swinton has a performer’s natural interest in lies. She said, “I was four when my little brother was born, so naturally I wanted to kill him. One day, I walked into his nursery and he was chewing the ribbons on his bonnet. He could have choked on them. I wanted to choke him. Someone saw me bending over his bassinet, and they thought I was trying to pull the ribbons from his mouth—trying to save him. They said, ‘Oh, what a clever darling you are. You saved your brother’s life.’ But that had nothing to do with my *intention*.”

She, unlike Eve, has little need for the arsenal of makeup and heels. She stands five feet eleven in her stocking feet and has a distinctly military bearing. Her father, the eminent Major-General Sir John Swinton—former Commander of the Queen’s Household Division, Officer of the Order of the British Empire, and all that—heads the family seat in Swinton, Berwickshire, land in Scotland that the family has owned since the ninth century, long before Sir Walter Scott remarked that he was honored to be a “mere twig” on the Swinton family tree. “*J’espère, je pense*” is the family motto. An ancestor was painted by Sargent.

She studied English and social and political science at Cambridge. She said, “I used to write poetry, and then I read too many books. ‘I used to write poetry’—isn’t that the saddest thing you can say?” She was sent, recently, these lines from Joseph Brodsky’s 1974 poem “Twenty Sonnets to Mary Queen of Scots”: “Mary, I call them pigs, not Picts, those Scots. / What generation of what clan in tartan / could have foreseen you’d step down from the screen /



Swinton: “We’re playing metaphors about real people.” Photograph by Glen Luchford.

ing a complex and distinctly cinematic presence informed by language and distance rather than the dramatization of emotion.

She is, perhaps, one of the last of the great cinema objects. She has said, “I don’t exist”—and the job description is accurate enough for a woman

performances with disinterest. She said, recalling the brilliant, if uneven, 1996 film “Female Perversions,” in which she played Eve, a lawyer who is rigid with self-doubt and perfectionism, “I saw it just recently, and it’s gotten *nastier* and better with age.” She bit down hard on “nastier,” with a deadly emphasis that is usually absent from her conversation;

A statue, and bring life to city gardens.” She said, in response to the poem, “Yes, yes, the Picts. Painting themselves blue, as my feral children do, quite unlike Mel Gibson in ‘Braveheart.’” The children to whom she was referring, four-year-old fraternal twins named Honor and Xavier (“She is my honor and he is my savior”), are as slippery-limbed as their mother. She lives with them and their father, the Scottish painter, playwright, and socialist John Byrne, in northern Scotland, an hour from Inverness. She sends her children to a Gaelic nursery school. She lives in a way that she was not raised. She said, “My father describes me as a contrarian. I have always been allergic to drama and dramatics, the very reason I cannot live around theatricals. It is too strangely out of the frying pan into the fire at moments.”

She said, of her parents, “They sent me away from Scotland to school in England when I was ten so I would grow up to speak like *them*”—meaning the English. The late Princess Diana was a classmate. “There is *no such thing* as a British person,” Swinton avers, aligning herself with the vast number of British subjects—Welsh, Irish, Scots—who once collectively outnumbered those who force-fed them the English ideal. Much of her oeuvre can be read as a visual dissertation on such problemat-

ics: being non-British, being non-male, being not who-you-are-watching-at-the-time.

She appeared, in 1992, in “Orlando,” Sally Potter’s filmed essay on the nature of the British Empire, which was based on Virginia Woolf’s story of a boy who becomes a man who becomes a woman over the course of four centuries of English history. She would not be nearly as believable in the part were she not subverting her own aristocratic forebears’ dream of England. (“I can’t tell you how autobiographical that film is,” she said.) When Lady Orlando, faced with penury, is propositioned by the unappealing Archduke Harry (John Wood), who says, “I am offering you my hand. . . . I am England and you are mine,” she looks at him ruefully, her expression tight with the strain of not laughing in his face. She turns England down flat.

She said, “It all comes down to class, doesn’t it? And I mean the middle class, because there is no other *significant* class. It’s about the theme-park-ization of Britain. We’re all supposed to aspire to the generic that the middle class aspires to. It’s not only the working class that’s disenfranchised but the owning class as well—disenfranchised from their intellectual and artistic aspirations. For the middle class, the only thing that matters is sitting on the fence, whereas

the disenfranchised classes aspire to soul values. I am of that other class that defined itself as different because—ridiculous word—we ‘discovered’ things and defended them with sharp objects and wrote them down.”

She appears at the end of Derek Jarman’s 1987 film “The Last of England”—another meditation on England as lost empire, England as dream, England as Thatcher-induced nightmare—in a long white wedding dress, looking like a Miss Havisham who has made it to the altar but is none the happier for it. In a visual melee, she is torn between comforting a baby swaddled in scandal sheets, posing for wedding photographs, and smiling at a posse of young men dressed in eighteenth-century fancy dress—the English dandy as glib, apolitical grotesque. She uses her body here as she does in all her films: as a visible script, a narrative of flesh. As many other notable members of the nobility have done since, she runs from marriage, rending her wedding dress; her long red hair twirls and swirls like a shroud she cannot shake; her face contorts in a look that is the visual corollary of English punk’s anthem about having no future, none of the promised glory, no triumph over the Pakis and blackies littering England’s shores.

She made seven films and one short with Jarman, starting in 1986, after she had left Cambridge and spent a year with the Royal Shakespeare Company. She never took to the conventional stage, but she did take, almost at once, to the intimate tangled universe of the film set, with its convergence of science and art, a closed-off world of smoke and mirrors. She has called her time with Jarman her “apprenticeship.” In his silent cinema (the early movies were filmed without synchronized sound; most of the dialogue was recorded later, in voice-over) she began to think of her work as performing, not acting. Jarman’s filmmaking relied greatly on the largesse of friends who shot, edited, and costumed, and on a distinctly political sensibility, informed by AIDS and the closeted lives that gay men led for decades for fear of shame or arrest. Swinton was the only actress to have survived his aesthetic, the weakness of which—a kind of visual solipsism overlaid with gold filigree—she counteracted with long limbs that





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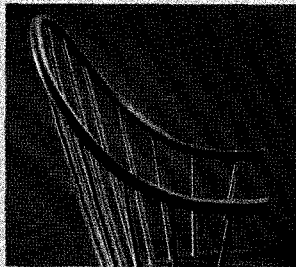
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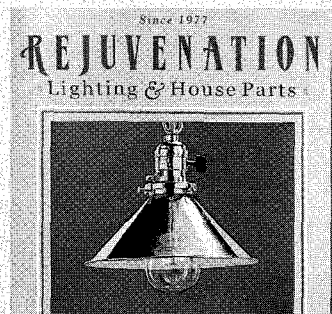
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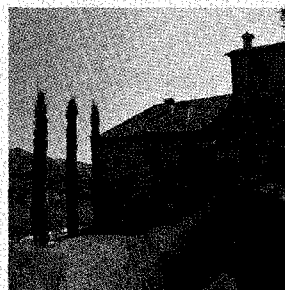
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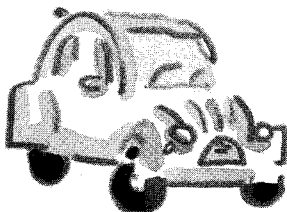


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connoted action, not self-absorption. She was, in a way, the strongest actor in his films—the idealized “male.”

She said, of those days, “There is so much that I do miss and so much—to be honest—that I don’t. There was a constant unspoken push toward fighting, which I always squirmed under. It infuriated Derek that I would not engage with that certain predilection for drama, and the awful temptation for queens in a pack to project onto the one female in their midst a dreadful, mawkish, pantomime diva-ship that is entirely inappropriate to the individual. But all this mixed in with more riches than I can describe—true familial companionship and guerrilla comradeship on a day-to-day basis that was beyond price. Surviving it leaves me feeling like Marianne Faithfull about twenty years earlier than I thought I might. That time just closed up behind us like a trapdoor, and now there’s no way back. Only fragments to take forward. There were so many casualties, and one is in mourning less for the individuals and more for the time, for—I would even go so far as to call it—‘the movement.’ But a regrouping is in force. Maybe more splintered and less obvious than before, maybe more infiltrated. The years of the cold war are upon us. More spies than soldiers, perhaps.”

She had, two years after Jarman’s death, in 1994, an attack of shingles. She diagnoses it now as a delayed case of grief. During her convalescence, she read the work of several mathematicians, as well as Thomas à Kempis’s fifteenth-century meditation “Imitation of Christ,” while sitting in a window seat in a London flat. She said that trying to understand those books was what got her through—that applying her emotional imagination to both the infinite and the concrete was a kind of balm. In her New York hotel room a few months ago, waiting for a call that would summon her to one of the events she had to attend to promote “The Deep End,” she com-



mented on another kind of grief: “I was sitting in the Inverness airport after the attack in America. I had to come to America for two days for an engagement I’d promised to do before, and I thought, What if the plane crashes—I’ll be furious. For my poor children, and for John. And I looked around the lounge and I said, ‘Well, where else would you rather be than with other people? What else is there but other people?’”

She is a visual enemy of political correctness; that is, she is very white. She has the coloring of a nurse, or, rather, of a nurse from literature—Thomas Mann’s “Magic Mountain,” say, or Sylvia Plath’s “In Plaster.” She is white on white, like a Butoh performer, but with swatches of lushness mottling her angular cheeks, thin lips, and high, intelligent forehead, like blush. She had, for many years, long, red, “actressy” (to use Susan Sontag’s word) hair, which sometimes blew across her open mouth, or hung dank with horror, as when she played a mother in Tim Roth’s astonishing directorial debut, “The War Zone.” The movie was shot in 1998, shortly after the birth of her twins, when her body was fuller than it had ever been, slightly battered yet vibrant, a body that Lucian Freud has never dared to imagine from the distance of his “gaze.” “I said I wouldn’t play this woman who had just given birth if I couldn’t show what a woman’s body looks like after she’s given birth,” she said. “There would be no point. I’m offended by all those films that show women, moments after delivering a child, with one perfectly rosy breast suckling a child contentedly.” She played a mother again, this time with short hair, in “The Deep End.” She called her character, Margaret, who tries to protect her gay son from the threat of blackmail, an “ordinary woman who finds herself in a film noir.” She added, “It’s a very unexotic story. Mothers find themselves in a film noir every other day. My byline for the film is ‘It’s a mess. She’s a mother. She cleans it up. Next.’”

She is not averse to fashion, or to dismissing it as “spinach,” as the fashion writer Elizabeth Hawes once did. She favors clothing by the Dutch design team Viktor & Rolf, clothing that, with its sharp creases and large cuffs, accentu-

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B. Smaller

"It's a midriff warmer."

ates her angularity and renowned androgyny. She would make a credible red-haired addition to the extravaganzas by Takarazuka—the all-female Japanese troupe whose male impersonators, in tuxedos or leisure suits, bring a new kind of love to Tokyo girls, a love layered with more sensitivity and less body hair. "She's a dreamboat," I have heard more than one woman who generally does not favor women say about this woman, who once said, running her fingers through her just cut hair, "What we have here is either a 'Young Americans' situation or a 'Thin White Duke' situation," referring to the seventies coifs of David Bowie. She further upset perceptions of her "maleness" by playing her own husband in John Maybury's 1992 film adaptation of the stage play "Man to Man."

She has been described by other women with the intensity one finds in letters written by women in the nineteenth century. In 1993, she and Sally Potter were in Moscow during the Moscow International Film Festival, after

shooting on "Orlando" had wrapped and the long process of screenings and press junkets had begun. Potter, who has endeavored to create the kind of narrative cinema that Jarman might have taken on, had he lived, wrote in her diary, "We pass each other hurrying down the long corridors of the hotel on our way to different events and commitments. But, eventually, we manage to find an early morning slot where we can meet. We sit wordlessly in my room gazing into each other's faces. I know her face so well—every curve of it, every nuance of expression. There seems to be nothing to say, because so much has been said over the years, and yet never enough to begin to describe the complexity of our relationship and the extraordinary endeavor we have shared. So an hour passes in silence as we sit, open-faced, opposite each other, occasionally embracing."

She stood in her New York hotel room, on her third or sixth or tenth visit to America, preparing to make another appearance in support of "The

Deep End." She had skipped the screening in order to spend more time with her children, whom she had brought along on this trip. Honor and Xavier—lean, pale, navy-blue-eyed and dark-lashed, with close-cropped hair—were jumping on their mother's bed, saying "Darling! Darling! Darling!" in high-pitched children's voices, but with a tone that reminded me of their mother. Their babysitter, a neighbor from Scotland, scanned the newspaper for ads for "Vanilla Sky," which had yet to be released back home.

Swinton walked out of the bathroom in a black suit and heels. The merest wipe of lipstick across her pale lips had transformed her face. She was an entirely different visual experience from the woman who had walked into the bathroom with her glasses and corduroy trousers on. She kissed Honor, who began to cry when she realized that Mummy was going off to be Mummy—or someone else, named Tilda Swinton—out in the world. She left the room quickly, not daring to look back, and in the hallway she wiped away tears of her own, saying, "Well, now you see." She got into the elevator and continued a thought she had begun as she was dressing: "When I saw a retrospective of my films, I learned something, which was—in its most gauche form—that I have a natural resistance to following the expected rhythm. Sometimes to disastrous effect, and sometimes to enlightening effect." She leaned back against the elevator's wall-papered surface. She said, "I can't resist trying to break that traditional rhythm." Later that night, in the bar of the hotel, she put her feet up on the table and went on, "Learn the rules so you can break them properly. So many actors are insecure. And so many actors say, 'I'm waiting to be found out,' meaning they feel that what they're doing is false, that they're not *becoming* the thing they're supposed to be—with their character's voice in their inner ear. But when I say acting is easy I mean it. Actors go through this whole thing about how difficult it is—'It's the conscience of the world,' of humanity, and so on—when it's really play." She sipped her white wine and concentrated. She said, "We're playing metaphors about real people." ♦



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SHOPPING REBELLION

What the kids want.

BY REBECCA MEAD

Takeshita Street, in the Harajuku district of Tokyo, is the equivalent of Eighth Street in New York: it is a narrow commercial passageway, crammed with stores selling imported Levi's, baby-doll T-shirts, and platform boots that have all the charm of medical appliances. Such attributes naturally make it a favorite resort of Japanese teen-agers, who are the most avid consumers in a country where, since the end of the Second World War and in spite of a ten-year recession, consuming is a crucial part of the national identity. On the weekends, Takeshita Street is mobbed by thousands of fashion-conscious Japanese youths: boys who parade around in slouchy hip-hop clothes, and girls who wear thrift-store-style dresses layered over bluejeans, a look that really works only if you weigh less than ninety pounds, which most of them seem to.

It would be easy, while squeezing through the crowds on a Saturday afternoon, to miss a store called Brand Select Recycle, which is marked only by a blue sign pointing up a narrow staircase, painted with the names of designer labels—Under Cover, Bathing Ape, Gucci, Prada, and, spelled incorrectly, Martin Margiela. The store is about six hundred and fifty feet square, its peeling paintwork illuminated by fluorescent light; it is crammed with rack upon rack of secondhand clothing, with hand-lettered, improbably high price tags pinned on. A black hooded sweatshirt bearing an image of Mickey Mouse holding a microphone and striking a rock-star pose, made by a company called Number Nine, sells for a hundred and twenty-eight thousand yen, which is close to a thousand dollars. A

T-shirt with the same Mickey Mouse image goes for more than four hundred dollars. Even in a society as affluent as Japan, where there's no poverty to speak of, these prices are enough to make a visitor wonder whether the yen underwent a catastrophic devaluation in the time it took to climb the stairs.

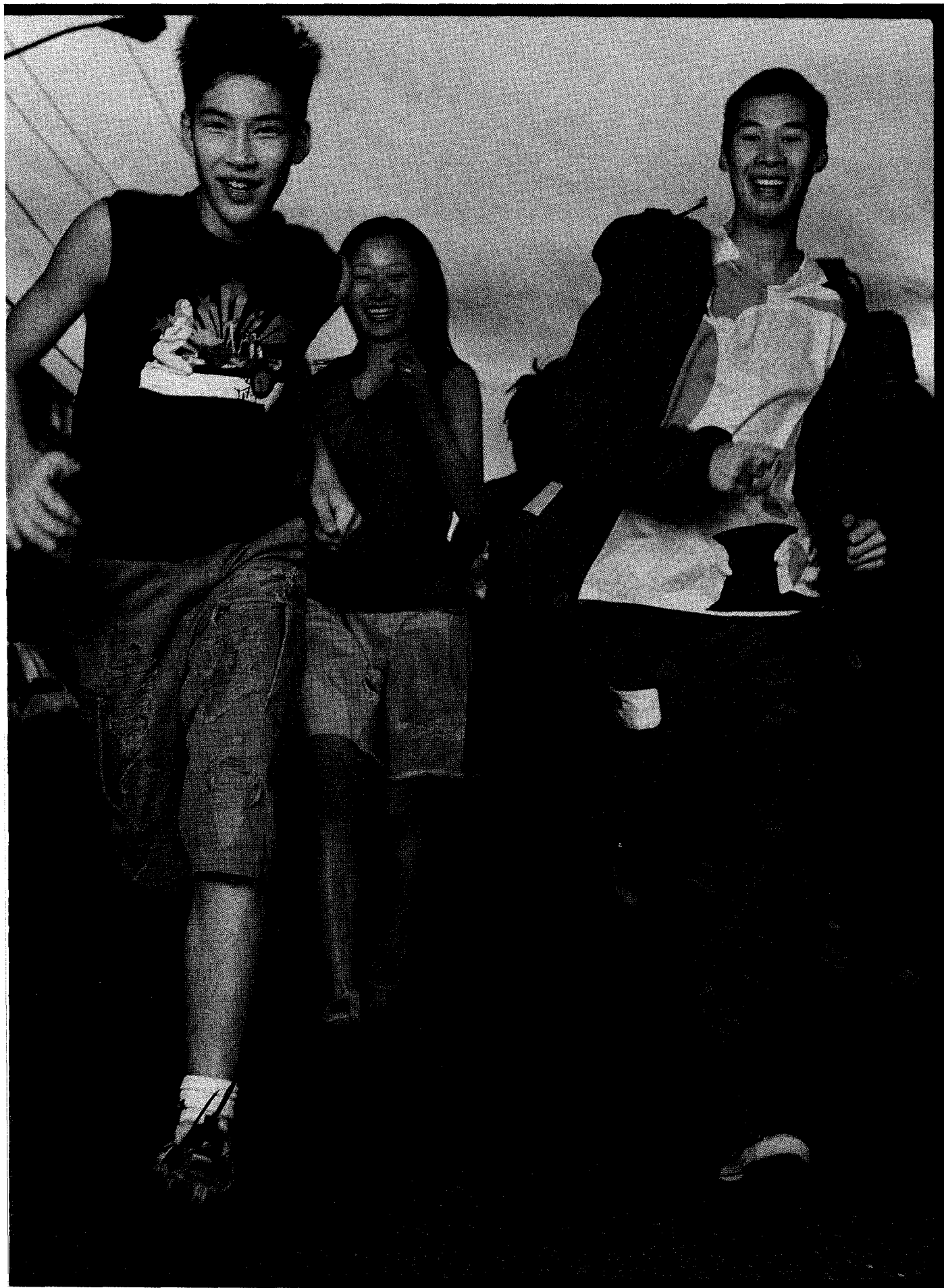
A thousand-dollar secondhand sweatshirt is, however, just an expression of market forces. "Six months ago, Number Nine was not as expensive as it is now, and probably next year it will go down in price," the store's owner, Akihiko Takeuchi, explained to me when I visited in November. Takeuchi is thirty-nine years old, which, in the world of Japanese youth culture, is decidedly middle-aged. His thinning hair bears all the signs of having been barbered rather than styled; he wears loose plaid shirts and gray flannel trousers and black sneakers, and even though he gets his shirts and sneakers from Hermès and his pants from Comme des Garçons, he wears them with all the aplomb of a man who shops at Sears.

He doesn't set most of the prices at Brand Select Recycle, he explained to me; they are established by the individual consigners of the items, who pay him a commission. By watching the buying and selling practices of his customers, who are mostly high-school and college students, Takeuchi has an unrivalled perspective on the fluctuating indices of Tokyo street fashion: the week I visited, for example, he'd found that boys were seeking out items from Head Porter, a Japanese luggage brand whose nylon snakeskin-patterned wallet was selling for a hundred and fifty dollars—twice its original retail value. I found sixteen-year-old Koudai Matsuhita,



PHOTOGRAPH BY MARTIN SCHOELLER

Japanese kids obsess over American sportswear, but they prefer the homegrown facsimiles of labels such as 20471120 (left), Under Cover (center), and Final Home (right).



CORBIS SABA

who was wearing a school blazer and had shaved eyebrows, intently pawing through the Number Nine Mickey Mouse T-shirts; he explained that they had a "rock-and-roll feel" that he liked. Another hot label was Bathing Ape, a Japanese skatewear brand whose signature is a distinctive camouflage pattern; a Bathing Ape nylon blouson jacket was selling for ninety-eight thousand yen, or seven hundred and forty dollars.

But Takeuchi explained that his customers weren't simply slaves to a label: he showed me a Bathing Ape chunky knit cardigan, its wooden buttons carved with images of apes; the style hadn't taken off when it was first released to stores, and now Brand Select Recycle was offering it for just a hundred and ninety-four dollars, much less than its original cost. And a mainstream designer label like Comme des Garçons had little heat in the Brand Select Recycle marketplace; you could buy a secondhand Comme shirt for fifty-eight hundred yen, or forty-four dollars. Even after years of watching his clients' purchasing patterns, Takeuchi said that he was still unable to predict when one brand would surge in popularity while another fell out of favor. "It's kind of like the image of the capitalist economy—the more desired it is, the more expensive it is," he said. "It cannot be accounted for rationally."

What is known in Japan as the bubble economy—the economic boom of the nineteen-eighties—provoked massive speculation in the markets and in real estate, and Japan is still experiencing the prolonged, low-level hangover that has persisted since the bubble burst, in the early nineteen-nineties. But you wouldn't know that the country is in recession from the way young people spend money. Because of the recession and the inflation of real-estate prices, many young Japanese continue to live at home well into their twenties; buying clothes is one of the things that living rent-free in a small apartment with your parents permits you to do. One young Japanese curator, Koji Yoshida, explained to me that the phenomenon of the free-spending Japanese youth is a product of paternal guilt. "In Japanese families, the ascendance of the father is the usual phenomenon, but after the bubble burst fa-

VIEW OF DELFT

The afternoon is slow, slower and slower
until a full stop is reached
long before anyone realized it.
Only the faintest nip in the air
causes these burghers to become aware
that their time is passing too, and then but fitfully.

Go stack those bricks over there.
See what the horse is doing.
Everything around you is waiting.
It is now apologized for.
The sky puts a finger to its lips.
The most optimistic projections confirm
the leakage theory. Another drop in temperature
is anticipated. It's all about standing still,
isn't it? That and remaining in touch with
a loose-fitting impression of oneself:
oneself at fifteen, out at night
or at a party in the daytime.
Oh sure, I knew it was me all along.

Then the sneezes got up to go.

—John Ashbery

thers lost their rights and respect," he told me over coffee one afternoon. "Fathers had to appease their children by giving them lots of gifts and money." Whether or not you accept the idea that Japan's youth-oriented consumer culture is sustained by a kind of commercial Oedipal agon, the swarming shopping districts of Tokyo on weekends do resemble a world in which adults have been more or less dispensed with. It's as if the streets had been cleansed of anyone over the age of thirty.

The crucial element that is being sold at shops like Brand Select Recycle is scarcity. In spite of the parallels with the financial markets, Takeuchi's customers aren't buying four-hundred-dollar T-shirts as investments. They want to be seen wearing an item that hardly anyone else owns but that everyone will recognize as exclusive. Scarcity, of course, is an integral part of high fashion, but it often has a basis in the practical difficulties of supplying consumer demand: customers will wait months for a Birkin bag from Hermès not just because the company knows the

marketing value of making a product hard to get but because the bags are painstakingly created by a small number of highly skilled craftsmen.

In Japan, however, all the skill goes into engineering the scarcity: designers produce only limited editions of T-shirts or jackets, items of the sort that can be easily mass-produced. This means that shopping in Tokyo feels a little like a bizarre parody of grocery shopping in Soviet Russia: you might want to buy a bunch of bananas, but the only thing for sale is pickled cabbage. At the Bathing Ape store just off Takeshita Street, where T-shirts are displayed like prints in an art gallery, sandwiched between sheets of clear plastic, half the display cases are empty, since the company might produce only five hundred of any particular T-shirt design. At certain popular stores, like Silas & Maria, a British skatewear brand, would-be shoppers are required to wait in orderly file in the street, as if they were on a bread line, before being permitted, twenty or so at a time, to rush in and scour the sparsely stocked shelves for any new merchandise. The

next twenty customers aren't allowed in until the last of the previous group has left and meticulous sales assistants have restored the shelves and racks to their unmolested condition. The whole cycle can take half an hour or more. This is what Japanese teen-agers do for fun.

One of the striking things about spending any time among fashion-conscious Japanese kids is how utterly nerdy they can be in their pursuit of cool. In Europe and the United States fashion falls decisively into the category of the frivolous and playful; in Japan the right T-shirt or cap is sought with a kind of dogged intensity, and not just by a fringe group of fanatics. Japanese boys in particular seem to treat fashion in a manner appropriate to stamp collecting or train spotting. Entire magazines are dedicated to the subject of teen boys' haircuts. The look of the moment is to have it bleached to a coppery color, cut into spiky peaks on top, and left shaggy around the ears and neck. The style is called "the wolf," although the boys look less lupine than feline, as if they were chorus members from "Cats."

"What looks dishevelled is highly calculated," John Jay, a creative director of the Tokyo branch of Wieden & Kennedy, the advertising company, explained to me when I visited his company's penthouse office. Jay's main client is Nike. "There is a word here, *otaku*, which is about being focussed and almost obsessed with something you like," he said. *Otaku* originally referred to a category of young Japanese men who were fixated on *manga*—the distinctive cartoon art that is popular reading material for adults in Japan. The word is now used to describe someone with a fanatical interest in computers or fashion. One designer, Hiroaki Ohya, drew upon the Japanese obsession with technology to produce, in his spring collection, a sporty woman's blouse that was shaped like a computer, with a screen printed on the breast, a keyboard at the waist, and a curved panel on the back which bulged out, like an iMac.

In the past two decades, Japan's contribution to fashion has been twofold. In the early eighties, a trio of designers—Yohji Yamamoto, Issey

Miyake, and Rei Kawakubo, of Comme des Garçons—started teaching Japanese and Westerners alike that wearing layers of oddly shaped black garments could be terrifically stylish. In the late eighties and into the nineties, it was Japanese consumers who drove an international mania for luxury brands that resulted in all kinds of musty old labels—the Burberry raincoat, the Louis Vuitton suitcase—being dragged out of mothballs and transformed, improbably, into trendy items. Those two phenomena continue: in 2001, the Japan market accounted for fifteen per cent of all sales for the LVMH Moët Hennessy Louis Vuitton group, and the opening of a huge Louis Vuitton store in the Ginza district of Tokyo in late 2000 drew four thousand customers a day. No younger Japanese designers have challenged the creative dominance of the big three; new designers who have emerged, such as Junya Watanabe, have done so as protégés of the established designers, not as their revolutionary offspring.

Over the last ten years, though, Tokyo has also witnessed a metastasis of street fashion: you see styles that originated in the West, often associated with a particular musical category such as punk, or rap, or hip-hop. Hip-hop style is as prevalent among Japanese boys as it is on the C train, although in the absence of an actual ghetto, where they might hone their look, Japanese boys turn to hip-hop life-style stores such as Real Mad Hectic, where they can not only buy work boots and triple-fat goose-down jackets of the sort favored by American rap fans but also watch a videotape of highlights from the N.B.A. on a flat-screen TV while nodding along to the Jay-Z album playing over the sound system.

Many of the most popular Japanese brands aren't available in Europe or the United States, because there's little economic incentive for the designers to undergo an expensive expansion into foreign markets when the domestic market is so strong and so easily accommodated. (Bathing Ape, for exam-



"We even tried a visit from a celebrity."

ple, has only one store outside Japan, in Hong Kong. You need an appointment to get in.) Because the Japanese are fanatical about fashion in the way that the Brazilians are about soccer or the Germans are about cleanliness, walking around Tokyo can feel like being trapped in an endless Halloween party where everyone but you has come as a member of the Beastie Boys, the Cure, or TLC.

The past couple of years saw the flourishing of the *yamamba*, or "mountain witch" girls, who tanned their skin dark brown, teased their bleached hair into silver snarls, and wore pale pearlized lipstick of the sort not seen since Dusty Springfield; they appear mostly to have retreated back to the mountains, though there are still a substantial number of tanned-and-blonded girls to be seen who model themselves on the look of Ayumi Hamazaki, one of Japan's several Britney Spears derivatives. These girls can usually be found hanging around a store called Egoist, which for a time was so trendy that the salesgirls themselves became icons. They appeared in the company's catalogue, and some of them established their own Web sites to dispense advice to their followers. One of the Egoist girls, a twenty-three-year-old named Shizue Nohara, told me that she'd worked at Egoist for three years. "I like to be the leader and have other people follow me," she said. She was dressed in a gray rabbit-fur jacket and bluejeans, Egoist's theme for the season being "Rodeo Girl." The previous season had been "Sexy and Boyish."

Another recent trend was wearing boots with twenty-centimeter platform heels. There have been at least five reported shoe-related fatalities, one involving a twenty-five-year-old who died after tumbling off her own footwear, and another who lost control of her car's brake pedal and crashed into a pole, thereby killing her passenger. Among the teen fashion avant-garde, platforms are over: one day in the shopping district of Shibuya I met two fashion students from Bunka, Tokyo's equivalent of F.I.T., who were both wearing white lace dresses layered over pants, and crocheted shawls tied around their shoulders, granny style, and who assured me that "comfortable shoes" were now in

vogue. Given that they were wearing gold-and-silver ballet slippers in heavy rain, though, "comfort" was clearly a relative term.

For a Westerner, distinguishing between clothes and costume can be difficult. Every weekend, on a bridge near the train station in the Harajuku district, dozens of suburban teen-age girls and a few boys stand around all day wearing gothic drag: black vinyl kimonos or full punk bondage gear, with whitened faces and blackened eyes. The kids on the bridge are misfits of a sort. There was one unusually fat girl with a white-painted face, wearing her school uniform: short skirt, thick cream-colored leg warmers rumpled around her ankles like the skin of an ancient elephant. (Many Japanese girls wear their school uniforms even when they're not in school. There is, not coincidentally, a Japanese word, *rorikon*, a loose transliteration of "Lolita complex," referring to the fondness among Japanese men for little girls.) "I come here to have a relationship with other people and to see my friends," she told me, and it was hard to imagine another fashion scene into which someone of her size would fit.

And yet their rebellion is a kind of performance which is grounded on a thriving commercial foundation: entire stores are devoted to selling the "gothic Lolita" outfits; and the inspiration for most of their looks comes from what are known as *bijuaru-kei rokku bando*, "visual-type rock bands": groups like Dir En Grey, five heavily made-up young Japanese men whose music is little more than an excuse for their often changing costumes, which can be ordered from special catalogues. Lately, those costumes have included white doctors' coats spattered with fake bloodstains, worn with bloodstained bandages wrapped around the wrist. As a result, the bridge at Harajuku looks like an emergency medical site staffed by the suicidal, bastard offspring of Boy George.

Given the influence of Western street style, Japanese boys have to work hard to create an identity that feels original. It's significant, in this regard, that the most admired figures in Japanese youth culture are not, as they might be in the United States, musicians or actors or athletes but d.j.s. John Jay, the Weiden &

Kennedy ad man, told me, "D.j.s represent the ability to create something yourself. They're very international. Japanese have a place on the international d.j. circuit. They give Japanese youth a sense of self-confidence, and they represent something that doesn't have to apologize for the past."

A number of the most popular streetwear labels in Japan are created by former d.j.s, who produce their collections much as they produce records, by taking bits of inspiration from fashions that already exist, repackaging them, and then selling them in a limited edition. The most celebrated d.j.-turned-designer in Tokyo is a thirty-seven-year-old named Hiroshi Fujiwara, whose name is spoken with something like reverence by Japanese fashion sorts. I first heard of him from the owner of Brand Select Recycle, who told me that the designers of Bathing Ape and Number Nine were "disciples" of Fujiwara.

Fujiwara travelled to clubs like Heaven in London or Paradise Garage in New York in the eighties, and then introduced Japanese audiences not just to Western club music but to fashion labels like Stüssy. These days, he helps Nike out with marketing ideas (he prefers not to call himself a consultant, just a friend, but he is the kind of friend who has flown in the company's private jet) and writes a column of fashion recommendations for a magazine called *Men's Non-No*. Fujiwara recently held an Internet auction of his possessions, in which a nylon jacket with a fabric insert on one sleeve, a piece he had both designed and worn, sold for 1.1 million yen, nearly eight and a half thousand dollars.

"Ten years ago, nobody thought about making their own clothes," Fujiwara told me, when I visited him in his office above the Nike store. "But you don't need a fashion background to make T-shirts. I would work with designers and say, 'I want a zipper here,' and they would say, 'You can't have a zipper here,' and we would have big fights." He says that one of his favorite new brands is a label called Unsqueaky, which a former salesgirl from Ready Made, a store he used to run, has started. "We wanted to call it Squeaky," Fujiwara said, "but someone already had that name, so we called it Unsqueaky."

For Japanese girls, the main fashion choice is between being *kawaii*, or cute—which means you wear girl-ish pastel-colored clothes that might have pictures of furry animals on them, and sometimes you actually carry a toy furry animal with you—and *bodikon*, or body-conscious—which means you dress like a cross between Lil' Kim and a *manga* character. Japanese concepts of female sexiness are about as easy for an outsider to decipher as a Japanese newspaper, but they go something like this: men find *kawaii* girls sexy because they're pretty and decorative and unthreatening, but a girl can't be too committed to the *kawaii* aesthetic because men will think she's a freak. In some cases, the men will be right about this: at a store called Milk, which didn't seem to sell anything without pink pom-poms attached, I met a young woman who had her hair in two bunches high on her head, and was wearing a short, white fake-fur coat with teddy-bear faces appliquéd onto the pockets and matching teddy bears on a scarf around her neck, and who stood pigeon-toed with her belly sticking out, like a preschooler. She said that her boyfriend had been embarrassed to be seen with her at first, but he'd got used to it. She was thirty-one years old.

The cute look is said to signify an assertion of independence on the part of the young women who adopt it, since, rather than simply putting on an ensemble presented to them by a designer, they are creating their own whimsical outfits and giving their inventiveness free rein. There's a popular magazine in Japan called *Cutie*, which offers hints on how to make one's person and environment more cute: a recent feature suggests sticking red heart-shaped cutouts all over your toilet seat, and coating all but the screen of your television set with a layer of white, furry fabric.

Confusingly enough, the *bodikon* look, which is all skimpy skirts and plunging necklines and high-heeled boots and other signifiers of hooker wear, is also understood to be an assertion of female independence. "Body-consciousness" is associated in the Japanese imagination with black women; and black culture is, among Japanese youth, taken to represent a kind of



The kawaii, or cute, look: "There is a Japanese word, 'rorikon,' a loose transliteration of 'Lolita complex.'" Photographs by Michael Roberts.

strength and sexuality, in a manner that would make an American reach for the sensitivity-training manual. Thus you find stores like Shoop, a boutique in a department store called 109 Building, where, as well as buying fake dreadlocks, girls can purchase what are known as "B-style" clothes: form-fitting dresses with athletic stripes down the side seams, and jackets bearing the slogan, in English, "Strong Black Woman" or "Black For Life." One day I met Kaori Ohta, a nineteen-year-old high-school student who was shopping at Shoop. She wore a fitted denim jacket, a short denim skirt, and high heels, had bronzed skin, and wore a long auburn wig. She'd been black for about three months, she explained; prior to that she'd been *kawaii*, but had decided that the *bodikon* look was a more appropriate expression of her strength and sexiness. However, she explained, expressing her sexiness did not amount to being a sex object. "I don't have a boyfriend, but if I did he would have to appreciate me for who I am inside, for my soul," she told me, batting her eyelashes. Ohta hoped to become a psychologist when she finished school.

Given the exaggerated femininity of girls' fashion in Japan, you might imagine that the country is being swept with a wave of ironic, post-feminist Girl Power. In Japan, though, feminism is still a new idea. It was only sixteen years ago that women were granted equal rights in the workplace, and young women who wish to have a serious career still find that acquiring a husband, not to mention having a child, can be a quick route to professional decline.

A popular figure among would-be unconventional Japanese girls is a twenty-seven-year-old photographer named Hiromix, who became famous for pioneering what is known as "girls' photography," images of herself and her friends hanging out. I visited Hiromix in her studio and listened to her views on Japanese gender relations, which were very bleak. "Almost all Japanese men suffer from a Lolita complex," she said. "Basically, Japanese guys feel they are threatened by these capable women, and would like them to be a little more stupid." Girls capitulated to boys by choosing cuteness over beauty, she said. "Beauty indicates a dis-

tance which is not reachable, whereas something cute is something that is accessible."

The Japanese tendency to detach style from content can be perplexing to an outsider: the kids hanging out on the Harajuku bridge might resemble the British punks who loitered on the King's Road twenty-five years ago, but rather than sniffing glue and snarling at passersby the Tokyo punks are polite and accommodating, happily posing for the tourists and doing nothing even as self-destructive as smoking a cigarette.

But local observers will explain that, although the semiotics are different from those of the West, Japanese youth fashion is not without meaning. Masanobu Sugatsuke, who is the editor of *Composite*, a fashion-and-culture magazine, said he believes that the fact that Japan is essentially a classless society means that young people have no way to distinguish themselves from one another except by adopting Western-derived tribal identities—surfer, skater,

biker, punk, raver—even if they've never been near a surfboard in their lives. These outfits are, however, an expression of an authentic Japanese experience: that of belonging to a society that until recently was extremely ordered and disciplined, but which, over the past decade, has grown more uncertain and unpredictable. Rather than becoming company workers like their fathers, young Japanese people are increasingly becoming what are known as *furita*, people who work part-time and without job security, either because they choose to remain independent or because companies aren't hiring permanent staff workers.

"Japanese people don't want to be growing up so quickly," Sugatsuke told me. "They would like to stay young mentally and socially." In Japan, living at home with your parents and going shopping every weekend is a form of rebellion. Outsiders have described this devotion to fashion as self-indulgent and amoral; Oliviero Toscani, the former creative director of Benetton, told

the *Asahi Shimbun* a few years ago that the girls who gathered in Harajuku every weekend in their oversized romper-room dresses and their silly shoes and their weird makeup were "tragic angels," living "the only existence in the world that is alien to the problems of the contemporary world, such as poverty, war, class discrimination, or joblessness." Toscani's view of the flawed youth of Tokyo did not, however, prevent Benetton from using the Harajuku girls in a worldwide advertising campaign.

It's not quite true to say that Japanese fashion exists without any view of the wider world or a political consciousness; it's just that the consciousness expressed is peculiarly Japanese. A designer who goes by the name Nakagawa Sochi, whose brand is called 20471120, is known for clothes that explicitly respond to Tokyo's overwhelming consumer culture. I met Nakagawa late one evening in a bar—he showed up with his brother and a friend, and, over several beers, he explained the epiphany he had undergone when he moved to Tokyo from Osaka. "Tokyo is free, but you don't have freedom here," he said. He is thirty-four, has spiky hair, and was wearing a Yankees baseball shirt. "When I came here, I found I couldn't schedule my time properly. There were all these cable television channels, and so I would watch television all the time. Even when there was a program I wanted to watch, I would get distracted by the other channels and miss the program I intended to see. Of course it is capitalism: when there are demands there are supplies to meet them. But in Tokyo we have too many supplies." From this insight, Nakagawa created the Tokyo Recycle Project, in which he proposes that fashion followers, rather than buying a new item, bring him their old clothes, which he will recycle into a new garment. It's as much an art project as it is a commercial fashion enterprise, and his work has been showcased at P. S. 1 in New York. The recycled item that Nakagawa shows in his publicity material—a baseball jacket which has been turned into a pair of pants, its sleeves having become below-the-knee pantaloons and its front having been transformed into what looks like a very sturdy pair of felt underwear—seems

THREE-WAY MIRROR



hardly likely to take off on the high-street level, even in Tokyo.

Other Japanese designers address international affairs, including Kosuke Tsumura, the creator of a line called Final Home. For the past few years, a mainstay of the Final Home collection has been a long coat made from transparent nylon which looks like a quilted down coat with all the down removed. The coat is designed to serve as a final home in the case of a natural or man-made disaster, Tsumura explained to me when I went to his studio, in a far-flung commercial district of Tokyo. For warmth, you can stuff its many pockets with newspapers, or with the floppy nylon teddy bears which Final Home also sells.

"Each customer customizes the number of bears, according to the weather," Tsumura told me. "In my own coat, I wear maybe ten bears. And if you have children, they can also play with the bears and not be scared of the disaster." After the Kobe earthquake, Tsumura sent ten of his coats to the disaster-relief efforts. When I saw him in November he was contemplating making a coat-and-bear donation to the Afghan refugees. Another item available from the Final Home store is a peculiar toy machine gun, made from floppy stuffed nylon. "It is a criticism of war, because the gun is not usable," Tsumura told me. "It is an expression of a yearning for peace."

Pacifist appropriations of militaristic chic were everywhere in Tokyo this fall, as if fashion designers had anticipated what turned out to be a widespread Japanese unease with the American war in Afghanistan. At the stores of Under Cover, another of Tokyo's trendiest brands, customers could buy a brightly patterned umbrella with a machine-gun-shaped handle, and the centerpiece of Under Cover's fall collection for women was a dramatic ball gown made from camouflage material; on the bodice, hundreds of large, pink rhinestones had been appliquéd. "The message is antiwar," the label's designer, Jun Takahashi, told me. "Of course, if your clothes are covered with jewels you can't go to war."

Takahashi works in a recently-constructed studio, a hangarlike space with exposed-brick walls; there is a cozy



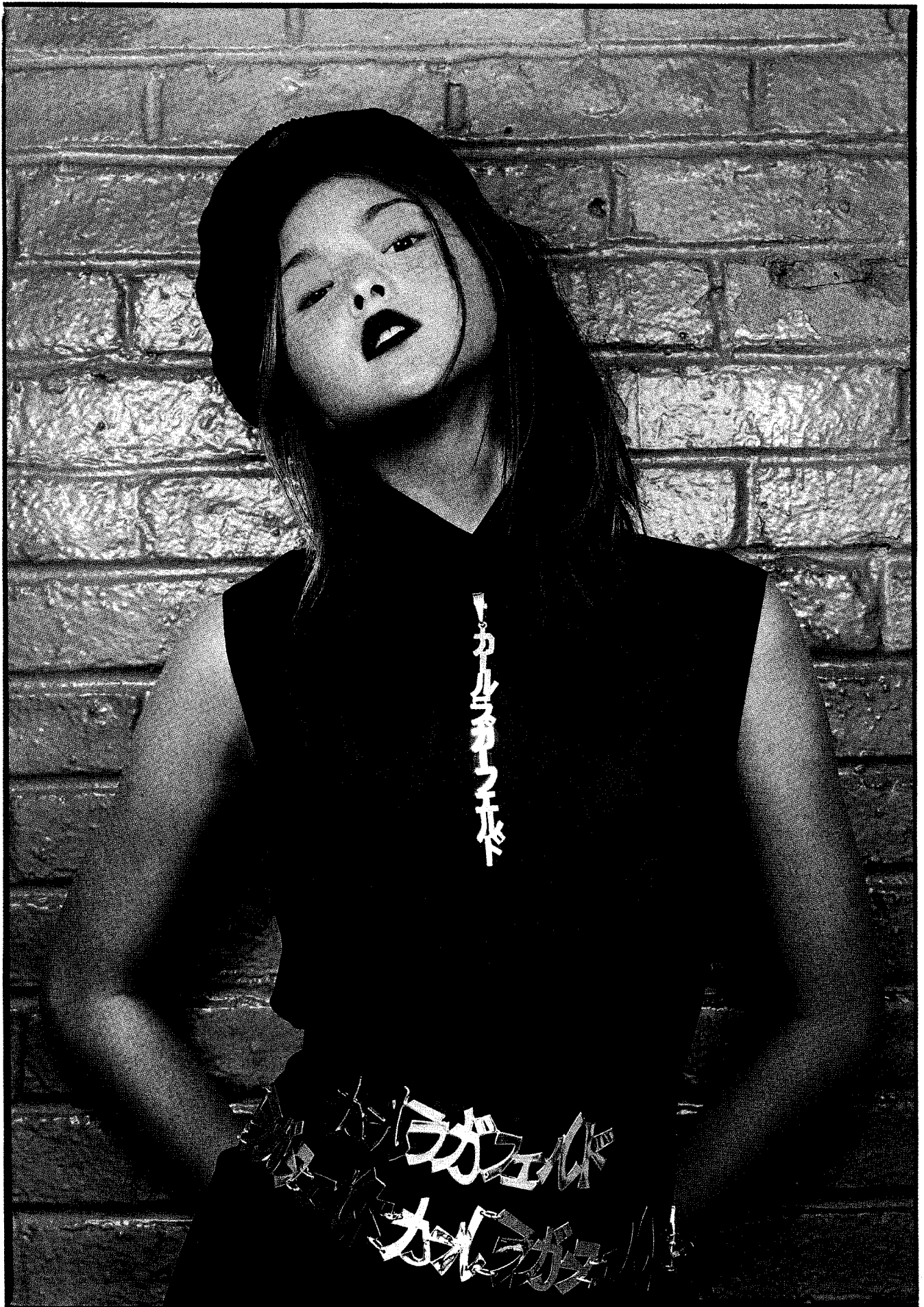
"Make ratatouille."

arrangement of Eames chairs and other modern furniture, and, custom-built into the panels of three desks at which Takahashi and his colleagues sit, oversized lettering reading, in English, "Fuck the Design." Takahashi is thirty-two, and when I visited he was wearing a baggy gray-and-black sweater, messed-up combat pants, a denim worker's cap, and fabric sneakers covered with images of hamburgers with eyes. Of all the young designers currently working in Tokyo, Takahashi is the one thought most likely to succeed on the international stage, thanks to his ability to blend the energy of contemporary Tokyo street fashion with the conceptual high-fashion artistry of Comme des Garçons or Yohji Yamamoto. Takahashi is an acolyte of Rei Kawakubo's, who says of him, "I like his attitude, his politeness, his rebel spirit, and the fact that he is always looking for new and strong ways of doing things, like me." Kawakubo and Takahashi are collaborating for the first time on a line for a new store which will open in Tokyo later this month.

Takahashi's latest collection was entitled "The Illusion of Haze," and consisted of a series of ruffled and embroidered dresses and blouses in tulle and floral cotton prints, and carefully tailored jackets and pants in pastel colors; a

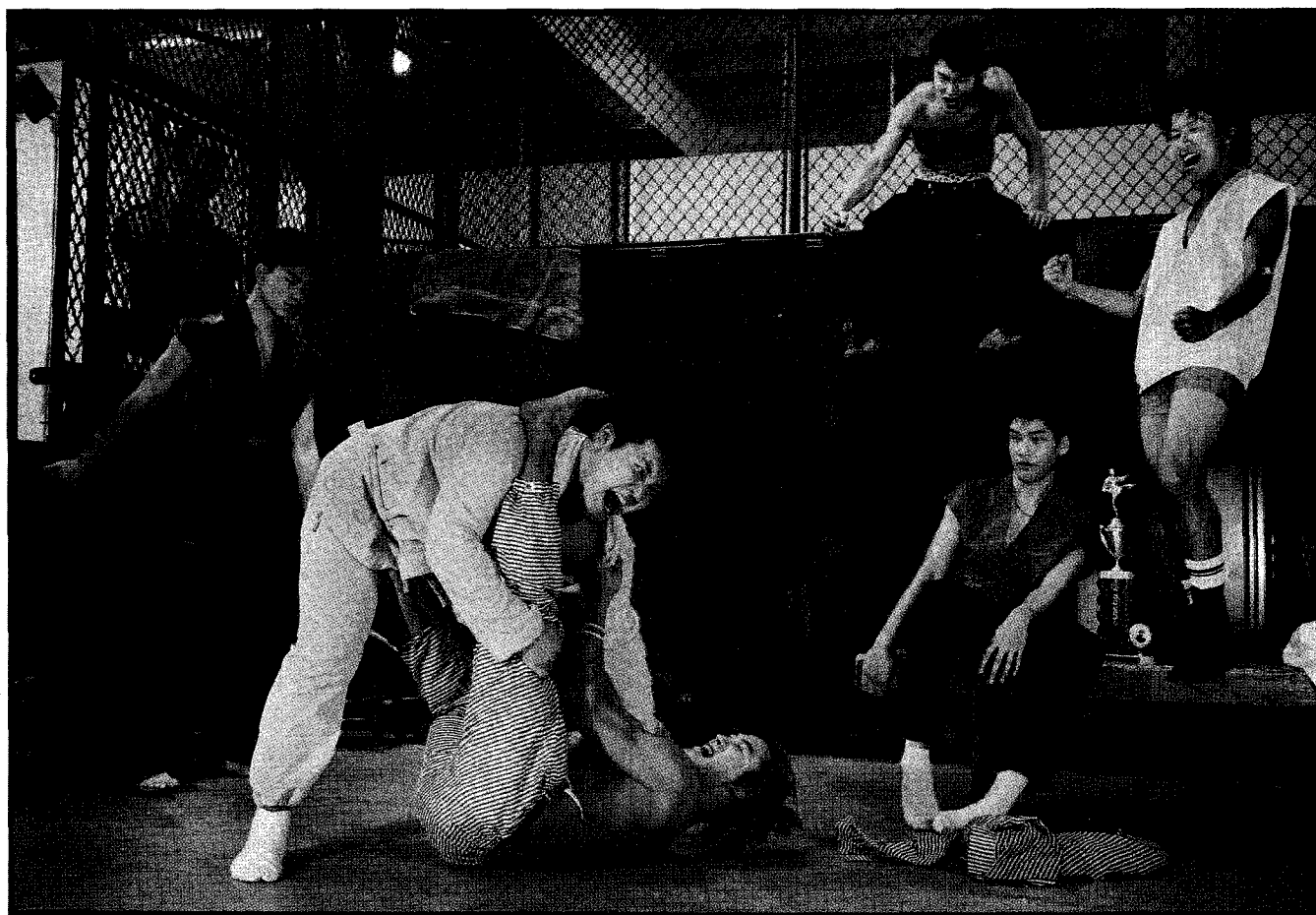
layer of black gauze netting had been artfully sewn or stapled over each garment, so that the flounces beneath were interestingly squashed, the sunny innocence of their contours rendered slightly menacing. The collection, which was generally considered the highlight of last November's Tokyo fashion shows, was, Takahashi explained, a critique of "cute" style.

For his part, Takahashi professes not to understand what drives *otaku* fashion followers to pay four hundred dollars for his T-shirts and those of the other young designers. "It's a very Japanese phenomenon," he said, shaking his head. "Japanese people read magazines as their bibles, and when they see images in them they have to have them and will pay anything. Generally, Japanese people can't make up their own minds and have to have an example to follow." Takahashi will be offering something new for young consumers to become fanatical about, when he opens a new Under Cover store in which he intends to sell one-of-a-kind, hand-sewn items. "I want to communicate with the customers with a kind of warm feeling," he said. The prices these clothes will fetch if they ever make it to the racks of Brand Select Recycle just don't bear thinking about. ♦

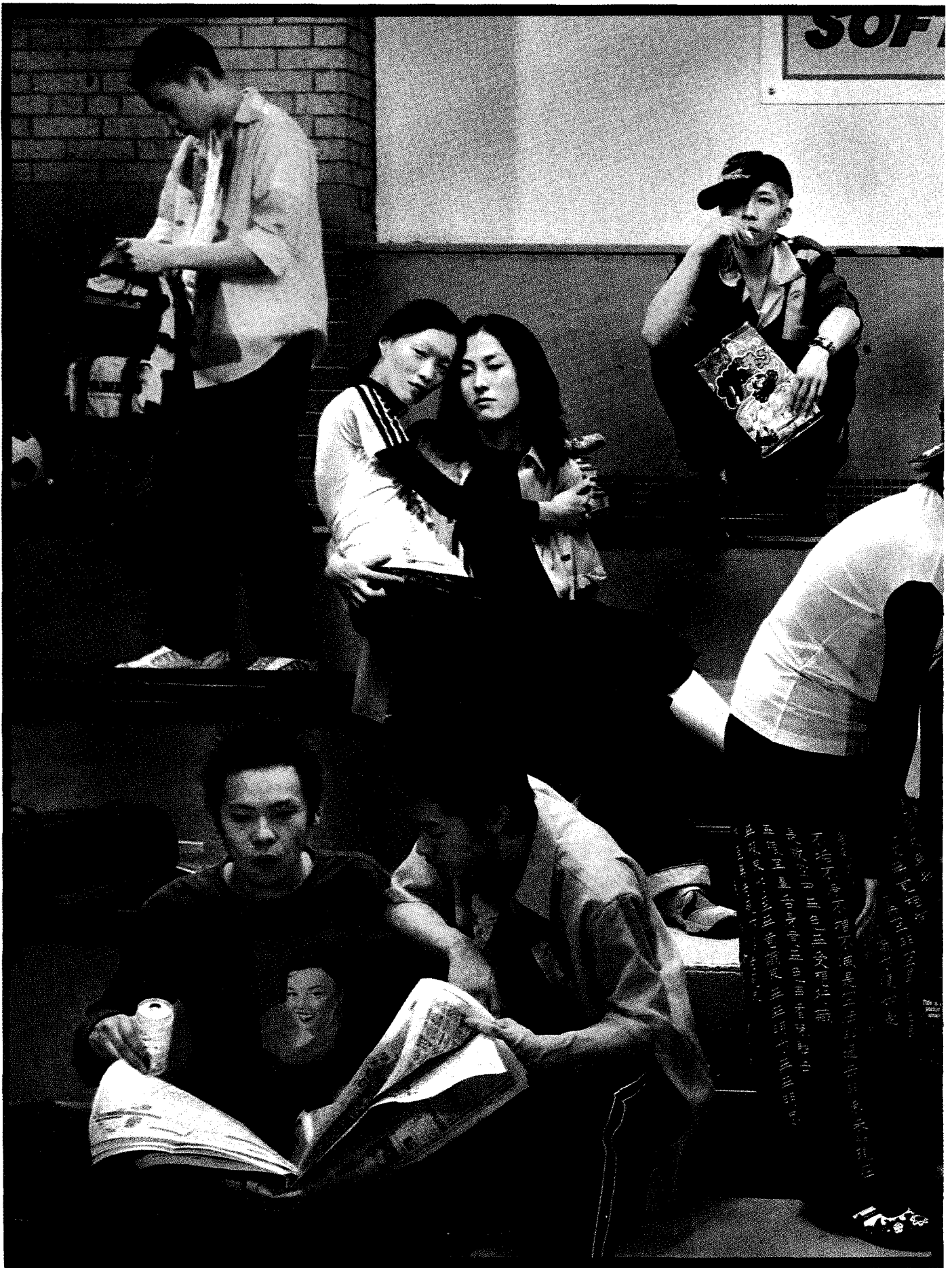


SUMO CUM LAUDE

PORTFOLIO BY MARTIN SCHOELLER • STYLED BY MICHAEL ROBERTS



Opposite: Dress with metal jewelry that spells out "Karl Lagerfeld" in Japanese, from Lagerfeld Gallery. Above: Leather judo jackets by Hedi Slimane for Dior Homme; cotton judo-inspired outfits (on wrestlers) by the Japanese label Frapbois.



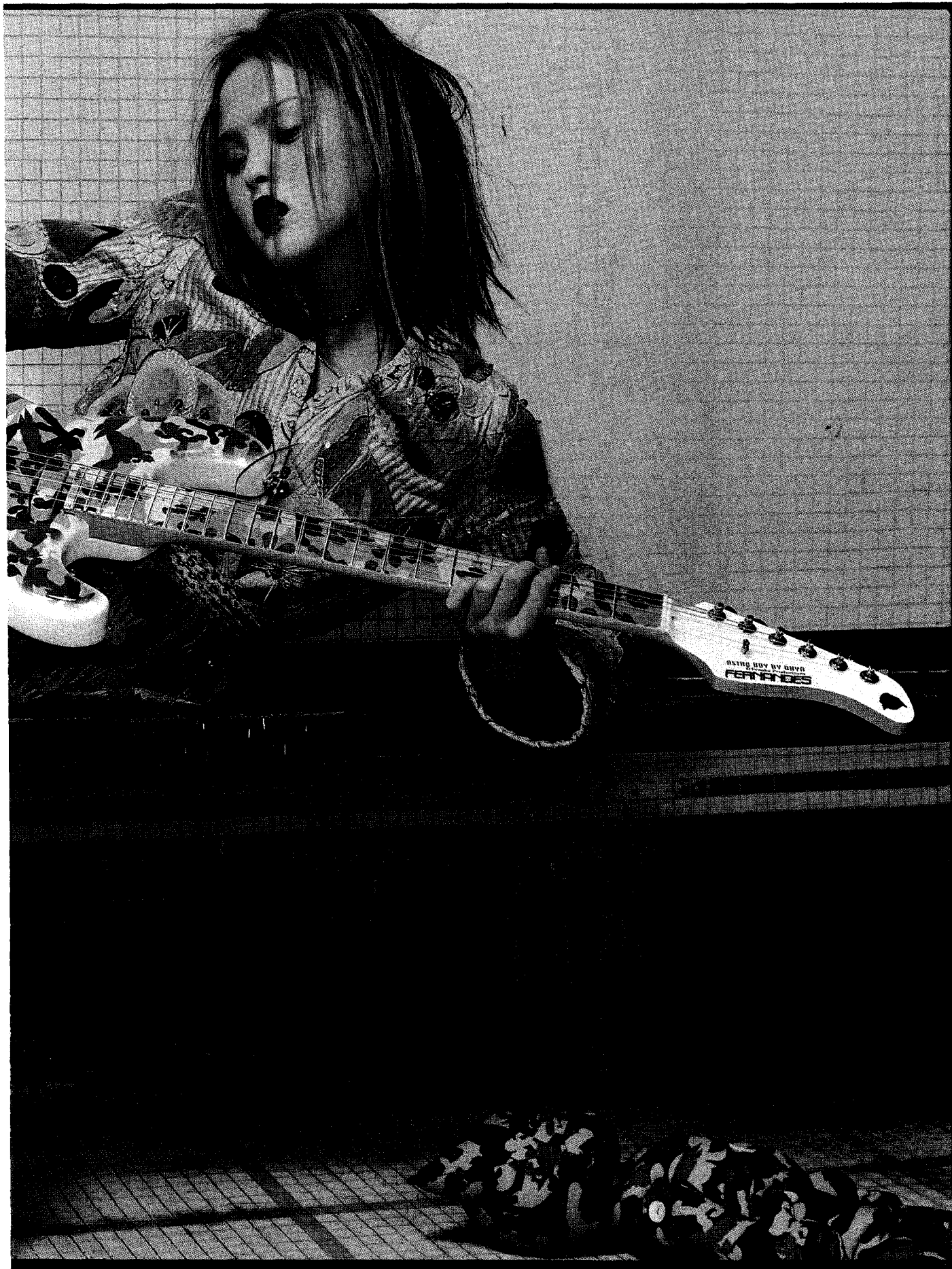
The spring men's collection of the designer Yohji Yamamoto uses thirties images of Japanese film stars and geishas. His women's collection



ombines stripes with printed texts of Buddhist writings. Backpacks by Super Planning Co. and Lovers House.



Devon Aoki wears an embroidered jacket by Louis Vuitton and jeans of her own design. The printed motif on the guitar and stuffed



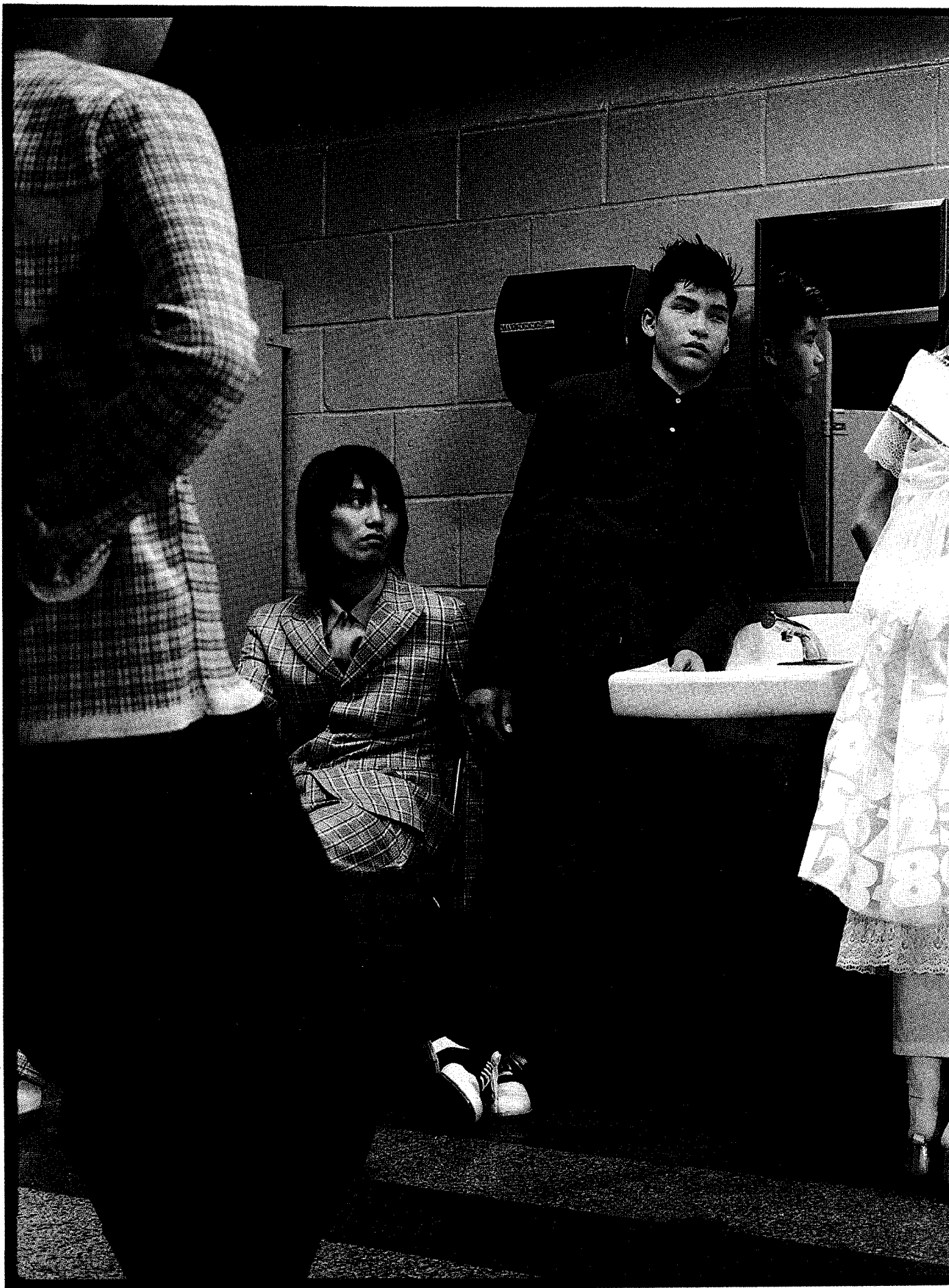
Astro Boy toy, by the Japanese label Ohya, is the repeated silhouette of the popular cartoon figure. Sandals by Manolo Blahnik.



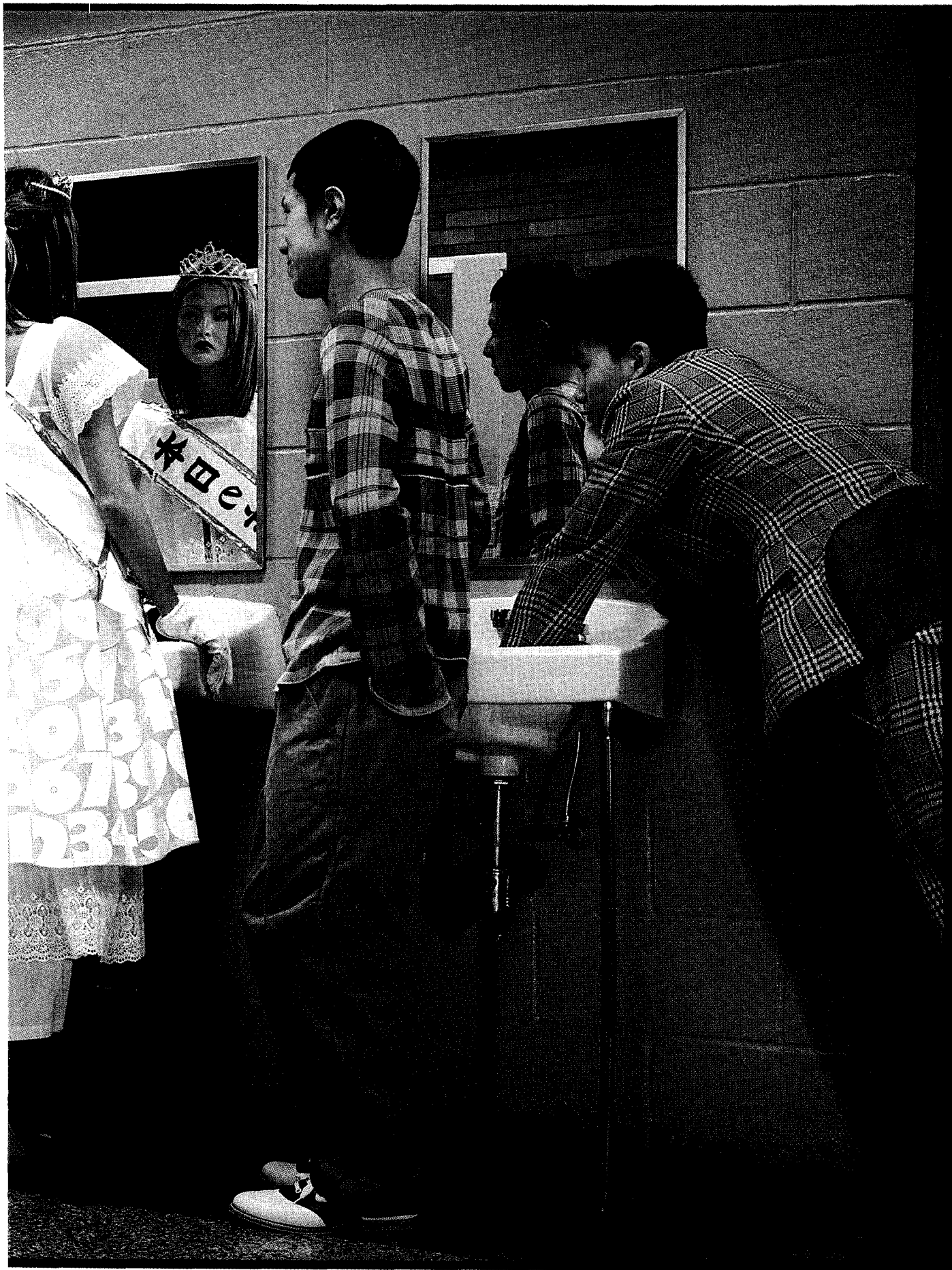
Above: Junya Watanabe's spring collection for women features printed and distressed denim. His men's line, on which he collaborated with Levi's, is adorned with slogans in the manner of Jenny Holzer. Opposite: Bamboo-heeled sandals by Gucci. Skirt by Jun Takahashi for Under Cover and nylon anorak by Final Home, two young Japanese labels.

HAIR BY DIDIER MALIGE FOR FREDERIC Fekkai BEAUTÉ; MAKEUP BY FULVIA FAROLFI; STYLE COÖRDINATOR: CHLOE BEENEY





The prom-queen sweetness of the spring women's collection by Rei Kawakubo for Comme des Garçons is complemented by her men.



CORBIS SABA

ollection, which features a mixture of sporty track-meet stripes and geeky plaids. Saddle shoes by Muffy's.

THE WHITE DRESS

What should nurses wear?

BY JOHN SEABROOK

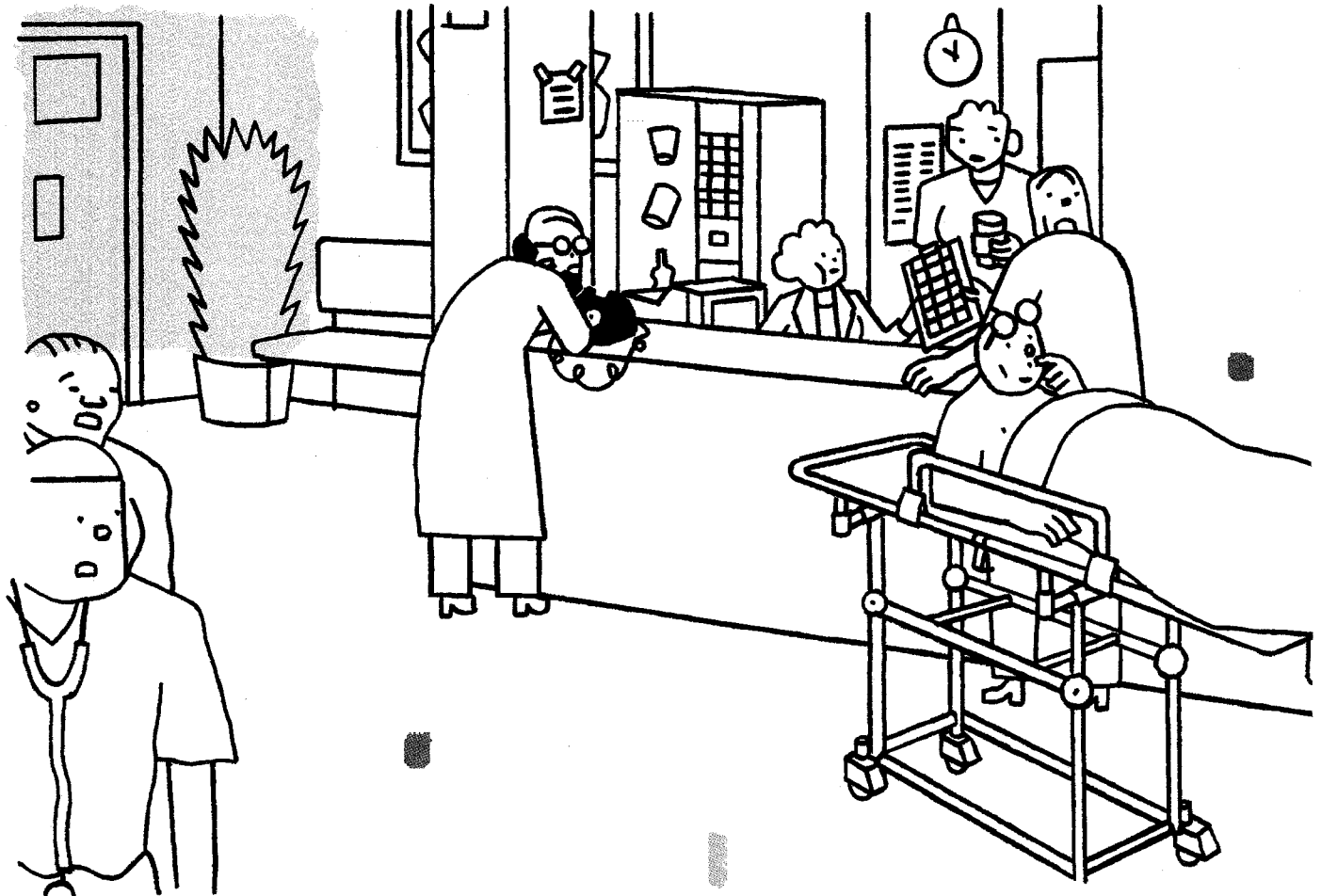
One morning last fall, the designer Yeohlee Teng was standing outside her office building, on Seventh Avenue at Thirty-ninth Street, waiting for a ride to the hospital. Yeohlee designs and owns the line of pricey but practical women's sportswear and evening clothes that bears her name, and she has a small, loyal following that includes Susan Sontag, Oprah Winfrey, Patti Smith, and, now, Valley Hospital, a four-hundred-and-fifty-one-bed facility in Ridgewood, New Jersey. About eight months earlier, Yeohlee had signed a contract with Valley to redesign the garments

worn by both the patients and the staff, beginning with Valley's more than a thousand registered nurses. Today, she was going to present the Valley management with muslin prototypes of those uniforms.

As anyone who has been in a hospital in recent years knows, the white dress, which was for decades the emblem of a registered nurse, has all but disappeared. These days, the R.N.s wear "scrubs," those loosely fitting cotton pants and V-neck tunics, and sometimes a short jacket with big pockets. Because scrubs, which are made in a rainbow of

colors and a variety of prints, have become the standard hospital attire for nurses, orderlies, technicians, and maintenance personnel alike, patients have no easy way of knowing whether the person putting in the I.V. is a nurse, a nurse's assistant, or a groundskeeper. Reintroducing uniforms would help to reestablish a sartorial hierarchy in the hospital.

"Nurses are one of the most important aspects of health care, but in most hospitals you can't tell who they are," Yeohlee explained, speaking precisely, as she sat with perfect posture in the



The designer Yeohlee is trying to bring back the nurse's uniform: she has to make something low cost, low maintenance, hot-water washable

back of a town car heading for Jersey. Yeohlee, who was born in Malaysia, came to New York in the early nineteen-seventies to study at Parsons School of Design, and has lived here ever since. She represents herself as an anti-fashion designer, a clothing architect who is more concerned with comfort and maintenance than with glamour and display; she describes her clothes as "shelters." Today, she was sheltering in a short black raincoat, black pants, a black knit top, black leather boots with thick work soles, and the kind of black rectangular glasses favored by people who are serious about design. "Uniforms make people feel proud of their work," she continued, "and if you're a highly trained professional, like a nurse, you want people to know it." She thought for a moment, bowing her head so that her dense black hair concealed most of her face. "There's a terrible nursing shortage going on right now," she said, "and I have this romantic notion that if

the uniforms looked more attractive more people would want to go into the profession."

The elderly woman behind the reception desk at Valley Hospital was wearing a pink jacket. Yeohlee, who asked to see the hospital's C.E.O. and president, Audrey Meyers, knew from her research that pink meant the woman was one of Valley's three thousand volunteers.

"Is she a patient?" the receptionist asked.

"She's the president of the hospital," Yeohlee said. "Please tell her Yeohlee is here."

"Yo-lee?"

"Y-E-O-H-L-E-E."

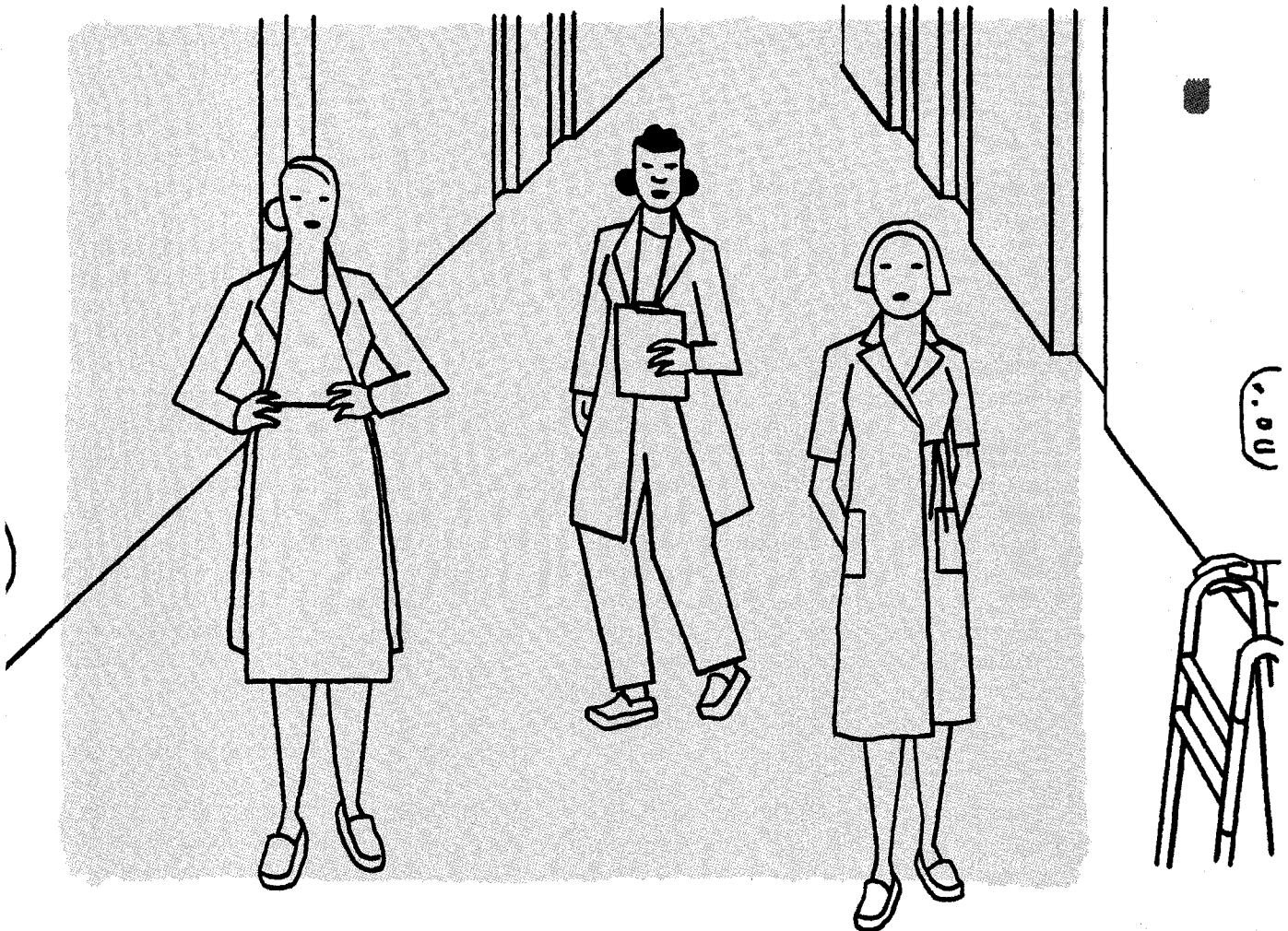
"Is that your first name or your last name?"

Yeohlee gave a slightly ominous-sounding sigh.

"Just say Yeohlee. She'll know."

The designer took a seat on a floral-patterned chair and looked around the

lobby, a large two-story space with expensive lighting and, in one corner, a grand piano. In recent years, hospitals have begun to look more and more like hotels (at a time when fashionable hotels are looking more and more like hospitals, with gleaming expanses of glass and plastic). Where there was once linoleum there is now carpeting; white walls are now burgundy or beige. These changes are made partly in order to promote "a healing environment," but they're also expected to improve the institution's image. Valley, which was founded fifty-one years ago, and has long served as Ridgewood's community hospital, nowadays has to compete with other hospitals in Bergen and Passaic Counties for prospective patients, especially those seeking elective surgery, maternity care, and fertility treatment. At Hackensack University Medical Center, about eight miles south of Valley, uniformed doormen welcome people to the hospital, patients receive com-



ain resistant, and sized to fit a much greater variety of shapes than those of the women she normally dresses.



"Honesty is a fine quality, Max, but it isn't the whole story."

plimentary toilet kits and bedside facials, and are invited to use the hospital's newly completed day spa.

Fashion borrows from uniforms, and uniforms borrow from fashion, but designers of fashion apparel rarely design uniforms. The uniform industry, a ten-billion-dollar-a-year business, which makes clothes worn by approximately twenty-seven million Americans, has almost no overlap with the fashion industry, and designers who do venture across this sociological divide tend to limit themselves to the high end of the service industry. (Ralph Lauren designed flight-attendant uniforms for T.W.A. in the seventies, and the staff at the W hotels wear uniforms by Kenneth Cole.) The constraints of economy and practicality in uniform design often confine fashion designers to a range of parameters so narrow they can't do much aesthetic maneuvering. And then there's the problem of sizing. Stan Herman, the president of the Council of Fashion Designers of America, who began his career in evening-

wear and sportswear design and now is known for his FedEx, McDonald's, and Amtrak uniforms, told me recently, "In uniform design, it's the sizing alone that puts a lot of fashion designers off. You know, not too many designers can bring themselves to do an elastic waist."

For Yeohlee, who had never designed a uniform before, the hospital clothes were a test of her functionalist philosophy. Whatever she came up with for Valley Hospital would have to be low cost, low maintenance, hot-water washable, crease and stain resistant (blood is a tough stain, but bile is worse), and sized to fit a much greater variety of shapes than those of the women who buy Yeohlee. The hospital had also stipulated that the uniforms not cost any more than scrubs cost—about thirty-six dollars for a top-quality set, although it's possible to find scrubs that cost about half that much. Most hospital workers buy their own clothes, and while Valley was budgeting money to buy staff members one new uniform each, after that the employees would be paying themselves.

"I am trying to make some sense of all this," Yeohlee said, pointing out the different outfits worn by staff, while she waited for Meyers. At Valley, as in most hospitals, the physicians wear white lab coats over business clothes. Some of the other clinicians wear white lab coats, too, but usually over scrubs, and only the doctors are allowed to have their names embroidered on the coat, over the breast pocket. About half the staff nurses wear white outfits. The others wear a variety of colors and prints. Although the original scrubs were all green (possibly because blood and gore, or the "expunge," as it's sometimes called in hospitals, lose their red tint against a green background and look just damp), vendors now sell a huge array of colors. At Valley, the clinicians in the Breast Center wear honey-colored scrubs, the imaging technicians are in navy blue, the EKG and telemetry staff wear raspberry, transport aides are in beige, diet aides wear pink, service associates sport royal-blue scrubs, female volunteers wear pink jackets, males wear burgundy, and the patient-care associates, or P.C.A.s, which is what Valley's nurses' assistants are called, wear dark-purple scrubs.

One of the P.C.A.s, a sad-eyed Latino of about thirty, was slouched in wrinkled purple scrubs in a chair near Yeohlee. On several of Yeohlee's earlier research visits, some of the staff told her they liked wearing scrubs, especially the larger people ("They hide in them, poor dears," Stan Herman says), but others said they would welcome a change. Of all the workers, the P.C.A.s were the most unhappy in their attire.

"They feel they look like Barney," Yeohlee said quietly, with a sympathetic wince in the man's direction. "It's difficult to feel good about your job when you're dressed like a purple dinosaur." Her gaze drifted down to the man's athletic shoes and socks, and her expression hardened a little. "Employees get to wear their own shoes," she said. "I would like some input into this decision."

Meyers was eventually located, and Yeohlee was escorted into the boardroom. Meyers, a slim, energetic woman who was wearing a skirt-and-jacket ensemble, was surrounded by her executive staff. Most were wearing business clothes. (At Valley, as at most institutions, people who wear uniforms work

for people who don't.) Also present was a staff doctor, Earl Wheaton, in a white lab coat with his name embroidered on it, as well as the chief nurse, Linda Cuoco, in a slightly shorter lab coat, and three nurse-models. While the doctors at Valley are in favor of redesigning the rest of the uniforms, they do not want their own attire to change. "They're proud of their lab coats," Meyers said.

Yeohlee's staff helped the first nurse get dressed, standing behind a screen which had been set up at one end of the long room. As we waited, Everett Ferri, vice-president of facilities management, told me the story of how the hospital happened to find Yeohlee. "Since we were investing all this time and money in how the rest of the place looked, it seemed like we should think about the clothes. You can use all the earth tones you like, but if you walk down the hall and see some guy's butt hanging out of the back of his gown it kind of defeats the purpose. So we thought about it and we decided we needed to hire a designer." The problem was they didn't know any designers. They called some names—the New York offices of Ralph Lauren, Calvin Klein, and Liz Claiborne, among others—"but they never called us back," Ferri said. "I don't think we got past the receptionist."

One day, Ferri was discussing the problem with a local developer, and the developer said he knew a New York-based fashion photographer named Trudy Schlachter. A delegation from Valley went to see Schlachter, and for a consulting fee she arranged interviews with four designers, including Stan Herman and Yeohlee. The hospital chose Yeohlee mainly on the strength of her presentation, in which she glued digital pictures of the staff onto blowup architectural drawings of the hospital's facilities, and talked about coordinating the uniforms with the interior design of each wing. "We were really impressed by her intellectual approach," Ferri said.

The first model, Melissa Meaney, a blond nurse in her twenties, emerged wearing a white wraparound skirt, which came down just below the knee, a white top, and a stylishly cut lab coat. She walked back and forth in front of the group, giggling self-consciously.

"Could you work in that?" Meyers asked.

"Well, I'm not a skirt person," the

nurse said, adding "I like the T-shirt."

"Knit shirt," Yeohlee said. "You're going to call it knit." She was kidding, but only sort of.

The coat was about the same length as the lab coats the doctors wear. Of all the garments, it looked the most like one that Yeohlee, who has a particular talent for coats, would show on the runway. It might not make the nurses any more noticeable on the hospital floor, but at least now they'd be mistaken for doctors, not for P.C.A.s.

"What about the pockets?" Cuoco, the chief nurse, asked. Yeohlee had done horizontal pockets, which were crucial to the line of the coat. All the nurses in the room wanted big patch pockets, such as scrubs have, so that they could carry their stuff around.

With a stoic air, Yeohlee asked one of the other nurses to take everything out of her scrub-jacket pockets. Out came pen, notepad, tissues, scissors, adhesive tape, beeper, phone, and stethoscope.

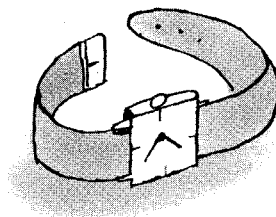
The nurses in the room were also concerned that the coat was too long. The line was nice, but would you knock over a bedpan when you were working in a tight space?

The pants, which Meaney modelled next, flat front with side pockets, would, like the skirt, also come with an elastic waist. Valley's staff of R.N.s includes fifty-eight men; the pants and knit shirt and jacket would be their uniform, too. Everyone liked the pants, which were higher waisted and wider in the leg than scrubs pants.

Meaney retired behind the screen, and reappeared in the dress, a simple wrap-around with short sleeves and side pockets. The underlap was attached to a drawstring that went around the back and tied to the overlap in front, forming a V neck.

"I could wear that out in the evening!" Meyers exclaimed.

Cuoco was immediately skeptical of the wraparound construction. "What would happen to someone with a bigger bust, if she was bending over a patient?"



"I definitely think it could flap open," Meaney said. "If you're bending down to lift a patient out of a bed, it's going to do this." She made a spreading gesture in front of her chest.

Yeohlee was nodding—she saw the problem. She stepped in with her notepad. She would adjust the closing of the dress.

"No one wants to get into a less than professional situation with patients," Cuoco said. "Or doctors. It makes people uncomfortable, when you're having very intimate conversations with people, if you're not dressed appropriately."

The presentation lasted a little more than an hour, and when it was over the Valley management appeared delighted. Yeohlee reviewed the changes, and the administrators arranged to come to her New York showroom in about a month, to select fabrics.

"We are going to have the best-looking nurses!" Meyers said.

Imagine a starched white cotton dress, long enough to cover the knee, worn with white stockings, white shoes, and a white cap. Although this uniform, which was for more than half a century the uniform of registered nurses in the United States, is hard to find on hospital floors these days, it remains fixed in the popular imagination. Few outfits conjure up such a potent and unstable mixture of associations. Perhaps because nursing was the first job that employed professionally educated women in uniform, a profession that is still, at 2.7 million, one of the largest employers of women in the country, the white nurse's dress is an intensely ideological garment.

The first United States nurses' uniforms were actually gray or blue, and they looked like hybrids of nuns' habits and the uniforms Florence Nightingale's nurses wore during the Crimean War. (Nightingale wanted her "Angels of Mercy" to wear uniforms in order to distinguish them from the "camp followers" who tagged along after armies.) The color white did not become popular until the early twentieth century, following the new findings about germs and their role in spreading infection. Prominent nursing schools hired designers to make genteel-looking dresses for their graduates, so they wouldn't be mistaken for domestic servants. Caps were an important way of showing rank among nurses. A black

stripe on the cap meant the wearer was a registered nurse; a cap with no stripe meant the wearer was still a student.

Why did nurses stop wearing the white dress? During the nineteen-sixties, an era that was hard on uniforms in general, feminists began to read its whiteness as a sign not of power but of diminishment. Elizabeth Norman, a professor of nursing at N.Y.U. and the author of two books on the history of wartime nursing, told me, "In the constant struggle for independence from doctors, some nurses started to see the white uniform as a symbol of the angelic, demure, dependent woman, not of the tough, resourceful professional she really is." Around the same time, as hemlines went above the knee and nurses' dresses got sexier, the naughty nurse—that authoritative yet submissive female—began to appear in *Playboy* cartoons, among other places. As the actual uniform has vanished from hospitals, this fantasy nurse seems to have grown in the collective id; she is a fixture of countless randy-postcard displays in magazine stores everywhere. Naughty nurses rarely dress in scrubs.

In the nineteen-seventies, hospital nurses began wearing white pants suits, and the eighties saw the explosion of scrubs. Scrubs were originally worn only by nurses in the operating room and other specialized units such as burn centers—they were the clothes you wore before you scrubbed. From there they spread to intensive-care units, and then, driven in part by the popularity of the television series "M*A*S*H," the style spread throughout the hospital. Scrubs are cheaper than uniforms, and the heavy lifting and tight maneuvering required in nursing is much easier in scrubs than in dresses or skirts. Scrubs are unisex, which helps eliminate the gender problem in nursing. And they are easier to keep clean, especially if they aren't white. So popular was the scrub that it hopped over into fashion in the late eighties, and remains a grunge fixture on college campuses.

Just as the white nurse's uniform was representative of certain attitudes about health care around the end of the last century, so colored scrubs tell you something about the nature of hospitals and health care today. Under managed care, many of the functions formerly performed by a hospital's own staff are provided by outside health-care companies.

In many cases, hospitals need to operate within spending limits imposed by these service providers, so they cut their own staff, and replace R.N.s with P.C.A.s, or with technicians who provide limited diagnostic procedures and support but lack the training of professional nurses. At Valley, administrators have tried to designate each type of hospital worker with a scrub color, but many other hospitals simply let employees wear any color they want. "Putting everyone in scrubs makes it possible for hospitals to hide the fact that there aren't many nurses on the floor," Linda Aiken, a professor of nursing at the University of Pennsylvania, said.

At the same time that hospitals have been reducing the number of nurses, people in hospital beds have been getting sicker. Hospitals often admit patients on the same day as their surgery, and discharge them before they're fully recovered; most of what used to be considered nursing is now done outside the hospital. Nurses who remain in hospitals are a disgruntled group. A May, 2001, study of more than forty-three thousand nurses found that forty per cent of those working in hospitals were dissatisfied with their job and almost twenty-three per cent were planning to quit within the next year. The average age of a nurse in an American hospital is forty-three, and many are expected to retire within the next eight years. A recent study published in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* estimates that by 2020, around the time the baby boomers are really going to need some nursing, there will be four hundred thousand fewer R.N.s.

Yeohlee's notion—that designing more stylish clothes for nurses might help draw young people to the profession—did not fare well among the women I spoke to. Linda Aiken said, "I applaud the attempt to make nurses more visible again, but the major problem in hospitals is that there aren't enough nurses, and they can't do their work as they're trained to do. The idea that changing the uniforms will make any difference in the quality of their work, or in attracting more nurses to hospitals, strains belief."

A nursing student in North Carolina, Rachel Lowder, said, "If I was applying for several jobs, one thing I would be looking for would be a flexible attitude toward workwear. Nursing is hard work. Swollen feet are a real issue, fashion is not."

The strongest endorsement for the return of the white uniform came not from a working nurse but from Laural Wood, who is a "nurse practitioner" at Medicaltoys.com, one of the largest dealers of medical-fetish paraphernalia on the Web. "Kudos to that N.J. hospital!" she wrote to me. "We feel that fetishists and non-fetishists alike would like to see the return of the crisp white uniform and cap. It represents a level of respect and recognition achieved through years of training and schooling."

In December, the Valley administrators came to Manhattan to choose fabrics. Yeohlee arranged to meet them at the museum at the Fashion Institute of Technology, where a retrospective of her work from the nineties, entitled "Yeohlee: Supermodern Style," and sponsored in part by DuPont, was taking place. In recent years, Yeohlee's reputation in the art world has grown. There was an exhibition of her clothing at the Victoria and Albert Museum, in London, two years ago, and a book of her designs, "Yeohlee: Work," will be published in April.

Yeohlee, again dressed in black, showed the group her capes, coats, ponchos, sarongs, and chaps, explaining her concept of clothing as shelter. Patricia Clark, one of the Valley group, said she was pleased to see Yeohlee's clothes at last. "I looked in the Lord & Taylor on Route 17," she said, "but they didn't carry Yeohlee."

After they had seen the exhibit, Yeohlee escorted the group to her showroom, a minimalist space with stylishly distressed concrete floors. Rows of fabric swatches had been laid out, and the group went through them, fingering each piece. They seemed a little lost before all the choices. Audrey Meyers caressed a swatch of silky polyester microfibre. "Would a guy wear this?" she asked Everett Ferri.

Ferri felt it and shook his head. "Not masculine enough."

Yeohlee pointed out a swatch of stiff fabric called Healthguard, which is apparently impervious to blood. "Why don't we pick a poly base and a cotton base, and then two cotton fibres for the tops, and I'll get prices on them," she said. "Do you want white white or off white?"

"White white, but not Nurse Ratched white," Meyers said.

When all the choices were made, everyone sat down for a moment. "So how do you think the project is going?" Yeohlee asked.

Ferri looked at the floor a little nervously and said that at the most recent meeting of the hospital's budget committee, the nurses' uniforms had come up, and some board members had wondered why Valley couldn't defer the uniforms until next year.

Yeohlee said, "But there's a moral need for this."

"I know," Ferri said, "but some people are saying we shouldn't spend money on uniforms when we don't have enough nurses in intensive care."

In early March, the finished nurses' uniforms—pants, skirt, knit top, jacket, three-quarter-length coat, and dress—went out to New Jersey in the back of another town car, for a final review at Valley. This time, the audience for Yeohlee's presentation consisted of practically the entire nursing leadership of all the health-care units in the hospital, along with the management group. Twenty senior nurses were clustered at the far end of the room. They looked like a tough audience.

Bettyann Kempin, one of the two nurses modelling today, who manages the nurses in critical care, was shocked at the prospect of wearing a dress, and refused to put it on. "I never, ever wear dresses," she said. "Maybe at the Christmas party, but that's it."

The lab coat was the most successful of the pieces. A center back seam with two princess seams on either side gave the coat both its shape and its one decorative flourish. Like most of the garments, it was made in two types of fabric, a polyester and a cotton, both incorporating DuPont Type 400 elastic fibers, which are supposed to stand up better than Lycra in hot water.

"I'm in love with this jacket," Kempin said as she walked around the room modelling it. "I could do CPR in this jacket."

When the dress came out on the second nurse, Karen Adounian, management started to applaud, but the nurses were silent, and the clapping quickly died away.

"Now how practical is this?" asked Meyers, as Adounian walked around the room.

Complete silence from the nurses.

"No, no, no," Kempin was saying under her breath.

"I'm not hearing any interest for the dress," Meyers looked around at the council of nurses. The nurses looked grave. "Thumbs down on the dress?" Meyers asked. It seemed so, but the dress's final fate was postponed for further review.

After all the pieces had been modelled, Meyers asked the nurses for a general critique of what they had seen. They liked the pants, but thought that the legs were too wide, and that there should be elastic in the back. They also thought the knit top was too fitted around the bust, and that it was too short—you couldn't cover your butt with it.

"So for the bigger people," Meyers said, "you want a sort of tunic, like the one Bettyann was wearing?"

"A scrub top," said Kempin.

"Right," Meyers said, "a scrub top."

Yeohlee bowed her head and said nothing for most of this, smiling occasionally, a smile that became more ironic as the critique proceeded.

Even the coat came under attack. For some of the nurses, it was still too long and bulky to work in. "It looks great, but you have to be comfortable," said one.

This statement seemed to rouse Yeohlee. "I strongly disagree that it's not comfortable," she said. "It's taste, not comfort, that we're talking about here."

"I think we all agree that we're talking about taste," Meyers said brightly, looking over at the nurses, who didn't look as if they agreed at all.

"Well, would you be able to sell these uniforms to your units?" Meyers asked.

Another silence. Finally, one of the nurses said that what her unit wanted was choice. The nice thing about the scrub system was that it offered choice, not uniformity. Also, as things stand the nurses can buy their scrubs from a number of suppliers, and the fierce competition keeps the price down. Under the Valley-Yeohlee proposal, they would be buying their uniforms from one supplier, at whatever price the hospital and its supplier set.

The meeting ended with the management and the nurses agreeing that they should put off making any final decision about the uniforms until they had talked to their staffs.

On the way back to Manhattan, Yeohlee said she was "dispassionate" about the poor reception her designs had received in the hospital. "Ultimately, someone has to say, This is what we're going to do," she said. "One cannot design by committee. One person has to decide."

She was sitting cross-legged on the car seat, and the soles of her Manolo Blahnik boots bore the white chalk marks of the cobbler who had stretched them, Jim's, on Fifty-ninth Street. "I really believe I have a proposal that looks better than what they have," she said, "and I believe they will come around and agree. And I still feel that when you are wearing something that looks better, you feel better about yourself. You know, there's nothing more awkward than people who are uncomfortable in their clothes." ♦



"Let me get back to you on that—I've got an office full of people right now."

UPHOLSTERY

BY JOYCE CAROL OATES

Had Ryan Voigt guessed that thirteen-year-old Sharon McGregor had a crush on him? Probably. Sure. Lots of girls had crushes on Ryan Voigt.

It was Sharon's older sister, Eva, who first used to hang out at the Voigt Brothers upholstery shop; her closest friend was Karen Voigt. Ryan was Karen's uncle. Ryan was a teaser. Loved to tease his brother's young children, and they loved to be teased by their boisterous good-natured uncle. Karen's pale, plain face blushed when Uncle Ryan called her "toots," "babe," "bombshell," and quizzed her about which was larger, her foot size or her bra size. The younger children ran shrieking with laughter when their Uncle Ryan threatened to tickle them; if he failed to follow, they slowly crept back to his workbench. Adult women, customers, lingered at Ryan Voigt's workbench to see what his plans were for re-covering their furniture, examined dozens of sample swatches of fabric, traded flirty, just slightly risqué wisecracks with him, and went away (Sharon could see, even as a young girl) smiling and gratified. "Uncle Ryan" was a few years older than his brother Jimmy but he looked, and he certainly behaved, as if he were years younger. He lived in an apartment on Main Street downtown and he drove a new-model car, and had no wife and kids to "drag him down," as he liked to boast. When he spoke this way he glanced with a small, self-satisfied smile at his legs as if you could see feeble hands grasping at his ankles and being repelled.

He was a beefy, solid-bodied man, with heavy eyebrows like streaks of tar, good-looking in a coarse, simian way. His hands were square and spatulate. He was one to hammer with precision blows. *Whack! Whack!* He pounded nails into the undersides of chairs that, upside-down on the workbench, made you think of human legs, upended. He had shrewd small "X-ray eyes," as he called them.

He had a quick sly insinuating smile. He liked to laugh, baring his big teeth, and he liked to provoke laughter. Especially, he liked to make you laugh against your will: his squinchy eyes gleamed with pleasure. His tone with most people, including his brother and sister-in-law, with whom he worked in the shop, was one of easy mockery: like a trailer truck rolling down a highway, Sharon thought. You were wary lest it swerve and roll over you, yet you had to admire such power.

Sharon's mother had furniture re-upholstered several times by the Voigts, and seemed to be pleased with the results. Sharon now wondered if her mother had been one of those women who lingered to laugh and flirt with Ryan Voigt. If she had been, Sharon hadn't been present to see it.

After college, Sharon had moved hundreds of miles away; she rarely returned home to Yewville. It was Eva who remained. Sharon sent money when it was needed, but it was Eva who'd cared for their parents, and then, after their father died, arranged for their widowed mother to go to a nursing facility, Eastwood Manor, when it became clear that she could no longer live alone. Eva was a high-school principal; she'd taught biology and general science; she was fifty-one years old and a woman of remarkable physical presence. There was something toughly radiant about her, a heat that could be intimidating yet also warm, magnanimous, protective. Sharon was three years younger, far less defined to herself or to others. Sharon had always admired Eva without especially liking her. But now that they were older, and lived at some distance from each other, she was beginning to feel a tentative, halting affection for her sister—though she still felt uneasy in Eva's presence, as if subtly handicapped.

Eva's tidy attractive house made it

difficult for Sharon to breathe. Her sister's life—husband an orthodontist, children grown, graduated from good colleges—was a reproach to her own, so much messier, undefined. By the second day of her visit, she wanted to leave, though the dinner the previous night had gone well enough. Eva's lovely dinner. Their mother had been seated between her two grown daughters in a haze of—was it love for them? Surprise that she hadn't been abandoned? The table talk had been of the weather, a safe topic, yet one you could have an opinion about, even a vehement opinion. Their mother had looked from one daughter to the other, smiling a vague sweet smile that seemed to say, "Wherever this is, why ever you have brought me here, I love you."

This morning, Sharon had slipped away from the house, feeling Eva's eyes on her back. No, not breakfast, not just yet. She called out an apology, a vague excuse. She could play the role of the slapdash younger sister here, behaving oddly, you might even say rudely. That was her prerogative.

Now she was tramping through a wooded lot behind her sister's house, municipal land that opened into a residential area of older frame houses, a Methodist church, the Toll Gate Grammar School, where she and Eva had gone many years ago. Here, at the eastern edge of Yewville, Main Street was a three-lane state highway. So early in the morning, just past seven o'clock, traffic was still light.

She was thinking how it wasn't Hell people feared any longer. In her own lifetime, that fear, like the promise of Heaven, seemed to have evaporated. Instead, it was the assisted-care facility. This was the Place of Dread. You tell yourself no. Not me. And so their mother had vowed, at times emotionally, "Not me!" Their father, during the last years of his life, in a perpetual rage over

his body's betrayal of him, had been adamant: "Not me. Not ever. Not your mother, either. We stay right here. This is our place. You hear? Not us!"

At dinner, their mother had said to Sharon several times, "I haven't seen Dad in a while," but it was said more in bewilderment than in sorrow. Somehow their mother had learned not to ask

and so nicely dressed, and when Eva and Sharon drove her back to Eastwood Manor at the end of the evening she hadn't protested, as she had on previous occasions.

Sharon was walking quickly, though she did not know where she was headed. Often, in Manhattan, she left her apartment and walked in this way, as if a dis-

One by one, the old single-family homes facing the busy road had been converted into something—a real-estate office, a dentist's office, a day-care center, a Chinese take-out. Karen Voigt had lived near here, in the barnlike shingle-board house where her father and Ryan Voigt had their upholstery shop. It, too, had been converted—into a secondhand fur-



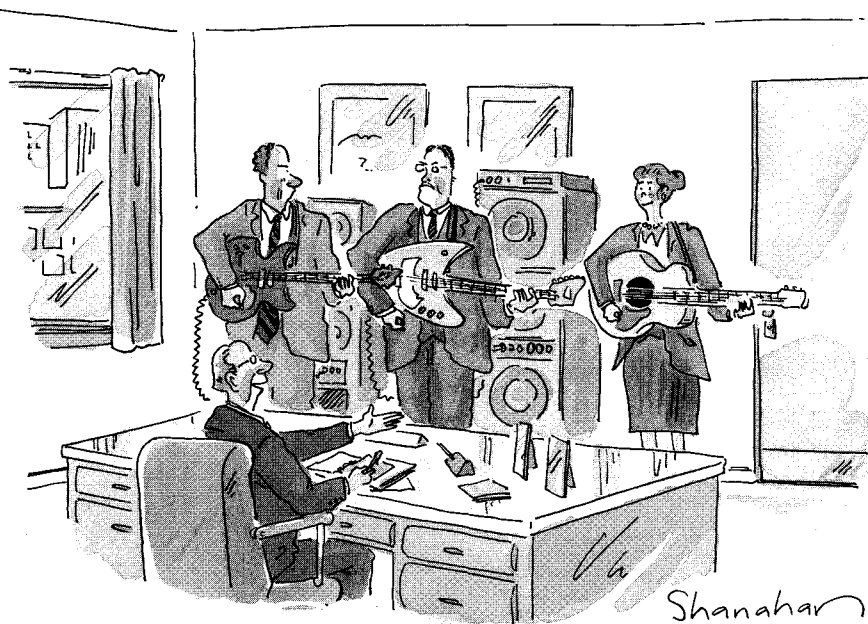
JAMIE HERNANDEZ

questions that betrayed her confusion. She wouldn't ask, Where is Dad? If you spoke to her of something requiring an act of memory, she would respond guardedly, but usually smile. You would almost think (relatives said this, leaving Eva's house, with an air of loyalty) that nothing much was wrong with her. She was so very attractive as always,

tant music were drawing her, or a conversation just out of earshot. Here in Yewville it was memory that drew her. She had reached an old, slightly run-down residential neighborhood. Nearly each house meant a name, a classmate. Her closest friend, Inge Sorensen, had lived in a gray clapboard house, which had been converted into a karate school.

niture store. But it looked vacant now, derelict. A For Sale sign was hammered into the front yard amid weeds.

Was this what had drawn her here—the Voigts' old house? She circled the building, peering through begrimed windows. The Voigts had lived in the rear; the store had been in the front. Mrs. Voigt



"Sorry, Mr. Gross, Mr. DeVries, but the firm has decided to go with the earthy, down-home fingerpicking of Ms. Aimee Parker-Grossman."

had worked in the shop, too, at a sewing machine. After Karen had left for nursing school in Buffalo, Sharon had babysat for Mrs. Voigt a few times.

In the dusty front window, there had been displays, unchanged from season to season—a high-backed carved-mahogany settee with a velvet cushion, brocaded fabrics in suggestive folds like luxuriant snakes. Hanging out with Eva and her friend Karen, Sharon would drift out of their company in Karen's room and make her way out front, to the shop. There, Ryan Voigt was usually working at his cluttered bench, and if he was in the mood he might tease her, ask her questions about boys, flatter her with his apparent interest. Sharp and jabbing and indiscriminate this interest seemed to her, like the actions of a bored boy stabbing sticks into a pond in the hope of striking something living. Yet she was thrilled, excited. If a customer entered the shop, jarring the bell above the door, Ryan Voigt would forget her at once. His coarse face with its heavy eyebrows and just perceptibly mottled, singed skin took on a new expression: alert, adult, courteous, and helpful. The mockery would vanish, like a soiled handkerchief stuck into a pocket. And Sharon would think jealously, *But I know who he is. Who he is with me, that's who he is.*

Karen's father, Jimmy Voigt, was often on the telephone with customers, seated at a rolltop desk amid a clutter of invoices, order slips, sample swatches of cloth. Or he was out in the truck, picking up furniture, making deliveries. Ryan Voigt, by reputation the more skilled upholsterer, remained in the shop. He worked swiftly, measuring fabric and cutting it. His hands seemed to possess their own instinctive intelligence. Watching them, Sharon felt an indefinable yearning. She was thirteen, and beginning at last to grow. "Fill out"—this was the common expression. Older girls like Karen and Eva were like grown women to Sharon, with their fleshy young breasts, widening hips and buttocks; prematurely adult in a way that both intimidated and repelled Sharon. She knew men like Ryan Voigt "liked" girls' breasts: but why? She was lanky, thin, her small breasts creamy-pale with tiny nipples like rapt staring eyes. She understood that she must make herself of interest to a man like Ryan Voigt, to claim his attention. Even as she shrank from his attention. When his small squinched-up eyes moved on her, when he smiled his sly smile and called her "toots," "babe," "sweetie," her impulse was to turn and run—and yet boldly she stuck out her tongue at Ryan Voigt and told him he'd better mind his business.

He laughed, saying maybe this was his business? It was his shop, she was the one busting in.

Hotly she protested, "I am not. Karen invited me, she's my *friend*."

"Hey, and I'm not? Sure I am, toots. Ryan Voigt is your *friend*."

It was banter. It was of no more significance than the noisy rock music Ryan Voigt listened to on a portable radio. It was a diversion, at most. Yet to Sharon it was the first sexual interest any man or boy had taken in her or given the signals of taking. She wouldn't realize this for years. At the time, she'd surprised herself with peals of childish laughter, rapid-fire verbal exchanges and feints—like snatching up a lighted cigarette of Ryan Voigt's from an ashtray. Once, when Sharon dared to take up a newly opened, still icy-cold bottle of Black Horse Ale, Ryan Voigt grinned at her and told her to take a sip. "It'll do you good, sweetheart. Grow you some—" He gestured at his chest. He meant "grow you some tits."

Sharon felt her cheeks blush, and said meanly, "You're the one—you're growing a beer belly."

"Yeah?" Ryan Voigt glanced down at himself. "That ain't all I'm growing, sweetheart."

How old had Ryan Voigt been, when he'd said such things to a thirteen-year-old girl? Sharon would calculate, years later, that he must have been in his early forties. Yet he seemed a generation younger than her father, who would also have been in his mid-forties, who never teased his adolescent daughters, and seemed scarcely to look at them.

For a while, Eva, too, had liked to be teased by Ryan Voigt.

Eva was a solid fleshy girl of sixteen with healthy olive skin and a dark downiness on her upper lip. Ryan Voigt's eyes snagged on her; you could see there was something in Eva that attracted him, though he was wary of her, for of Karen's girl friends Eva McGregor was the one least intimidated by him. He had to respect her way of standing with her hands on her hips and staring him down.

One day, when the girls were ambling about the shop, testing out sofas and chairs by lounging in them, pretending to be prissy adult females, they overheard Ryan Voigt speaking in an unnerving voice, one they'd never heard

before: he must have been talking to someone who owed him money, and he was using words like weapons ("fuck," "asshole," "son of a bitch"). It was frightening to hear yet also thrilling. When Ryan Voigt hung up the phone, the girls pretended not to have heard. Karen was chattering nervously. Eva had discovered crimson velvet scraps in the discard pile, and was holding them up admiringly. She asked Karen if she could have them, and Karen said, "Sure, I guess so. They just get thrown out." Ryan Voigt lit a cigarette, came over, and asked what the hell Eva wanted with the scraps, and Eva said she wanted to re-cover a cushion she kept on her bed, this was a color that matched, and the fabric was beautiful, and Ryan Voigt pulled the scraps out of Eva's hand and said, "I'll make you a cushion, honey." He was heated, nerved up from the phone call. His eyes dropped to Eva's ankles and rose swiftly. "See, honey, I'll make you a dandy cushion if you promise me one thing."

Eva said guardedly, "What?"

Ryan Voigt said, "If you sit on it. Your sweet tender ass. I'll make the cushion if you promise you'll sit on it bare."

Eva turned away, muttering what sounded like, "I hate you." The other girls sniggered. (Though Sharon felt a stab of jealousy. She knew what Ryan Voigt's offer meant: he preferred her sister to her.) Flush-faced, Eva slammed out the front door of the shop, clanging the bell behind her.

Ryan Voigt called after, "Hey, I'm serious, hon. You'll see."

In fact, Ryan Voigt did make a cushion, covered in the splendid crimson velvet, with black silk tassels; Sharon would discover it on her sister's bed in a week or so. "Where'd you get that?" Sharon asked, shocked. Eva shrugged, with an evasive smile. It was a Yewville High affectation at the time to repel unwanted questions with the airy rejoinder, "Who wants to know?"

Shame makes a haze of memory. Sharon still could not recall the precise chronology of what happened that evening at the Voigt home.

Well, he came to the rear door. Rapped on the glass with his knuckles. Grinned at her. "Hey, toots, want some company?"

Did Sharon open the door? Or had Ryan Voigt opened it? It was just past 9:30 P.M. The Voigts had driven to Buffalo to visit relatives and were due back, Mrs. Voigt had promised, around 11 P.M. Sharon had babysat for Mrs. Voigt twice before, she knew the house and felt comfortable in it. She would have locked the door from the inside (as Mrs. Voigt had instructed) but Ryan Voigt had his own key, didn't he? He was part owner, wasn't he?

It was the sequence of small moments, remarks, actions that would elude her. She felt, now, that recollecting the events was like trying to piece together a sheet of broken glass. She did remember Ryan Voigt brushing past her in the kitchen, just a little too near, and the hairs on her forearm stirring. There was a feeling of wonderment as well as excitement, of elation and alarm. He was at the "fridge," as he called it. "Hey, want an ale?" he asked, and Sharon laughed nervously and said no thanks. In fact she'd been drinking Pepsis. She had made popcorn for the Voigt children, and it was eaten except for a few greasy burnt kernels. In the living room she'd been doing math homework and watching TV, grateful to be alone and quiet, now that the children were in bed. As far as Sharon knew, even the restless four-year-old boy was asleep. Ryan Voigt grinned, pushing the bottle into her face. Practically into her mouth, bumping her teeth. "It won't kill you, it'll do you good." His eyes were red-veined and his skin was coarsely mottled as if he'd been out in the sun that day. Sharon could smell his fierce, beery breath.

Ryan Voigt wandered into the living room and stared derisively at the TV screen, switched channels, and then turned the set off—"Load of crap." He'd just dropped in to see his little nephew and niece, he said. Play with them. They were terrific kids, crazy about their Uncle Ryan. Why would he want kids of his own? Why'd anybody want to get married—y'know what Elvis Presley said, Why buy your own cow when you can get milk through a fence? Ryan Voigt laughed at this witticism, staring at Sharon. He seemed not to know her name, but he knew who she was: he began to ask her about Eva, describing her as "your big sister"—"that gal with the boobs and the sweet ass." He asked if Eva had a boyfriend, and then asked

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if Sharon had a boyfriend, and that was when she began to feel, not frightened exactly, not yet, but disoriented. She'd been accustomed to moving in another direction, a direction she'd taken for granted. Except now she wasn't up front in the upholstery shop, it wasn't daytime, and she was alone with Ryan Voigt.

He sat heavily on the sofa, partly crushing her math textbook. He snatched it up, leafed through it, tossed it onto the floor. He patted the cushion beside him, inviting her to sit. He was wearing a pull-over sports shirt through which he'd sweated across his chest, and he was in need of a shave. He smiled; his smile was boyish, lopsided, and he held on to it too long. Sharon stood smiling, too; there was a roaring in her ears, like

laughter at a distance. Ryan Voigt drank from his bottle of ale in large thirsty mouthfuls. He teased Sharon, telling her she looked like she "had a stick up her ass." He asked her what his sister-in-law paid her for babysitting, and he said he'd pay her double that to babysit him, over at his place. He asked her if she was one of those girls who wanted to get married young and have babies, if she knew how babies were made, and if she thought it sounded like fun. He got up suddenly and went to get another ale from the fridge, brushing past Sharon, who took an instinctive step backward. He smiled at her, leaning close. There was a choked look to his face, as if something he'd swallowed was backing up on him, and Sharon could smell his breath, could almost taste it. He asked her which was

larger, her shoe size or her bra size. He asked her if the tops of her thighs rubbed together when she walked wearing only panties. She laughed nervously, her face very hot. She hadn't the capacity to think *I don't want him to like me, I guess*. She hadn't the capacity to think, as an older girl like Eva would have thought, *I'll wake the children, he'll have to go home then*. Nor did it occur to her simply to tell him, *Go home. Leave me alone*.

She escaped to the bathroom. She had to use the bathroom, in fact. And Ryan Voigt lumbered after her, teasing and chortling like a small boy, except there was a meanness in his voice that wasn't a small boy's meanness. Sharon shut the bathroom door quickly and fumbled to lock it. Ryan Voigt sniggered on the other side. "Don't be long, I'm listening, toots. Need some help getting your panties down?" She was frightened now. She was trapped, and she was having difficulty thinking. Ryan Voigt said, "Don't be shy. You know you aren't shy. You girls."

She saw the doorknob turning, and said, "No! Leave me alone. Please." Suddenly she was begging. She didn't know what to call this man: Ryan? Mr. Voigt? A few times she'd echoed Karen, calling him "Uncle Ryan," but that was in play, and this wasn't play. Ryan Voigt laughed, bumping against the door. "Darlin', I'm waiting. You didn't fall in, did you?" The bathroom had a single window, and this window was jammed partway up; only a very small child could have squeezed through it. Yet in her panic Sharon considered the possibility. Better yet, she might smash the glass, and crawl through, where there was more room, climbing up onto the toilet, then the sink, then the windowsill. Amid slivers of broken glass she could escape. But the Voigts would be angry with her. Her parents would be angry. Ryan Voigt would claim he'd only been teasing, which was possibly true. After all, Sharon hung about the upholstery shop often, and never minded when Ryan Voigt teased her then. She would be laughed at, ridiculed. Everyone in the neighborhood and everyone at school would know. So she stood, crying. At some point she'd begun to cry. Possibly Ryan Voigt could hear her crying. He'd ceased rapping on the door. Then he turned up outside the bathroom, speak-



"He has your intense patriotic gaze."

ing to her through the window. There were bushes just outside the window, and the ground was lower than the floor, so he couldn't see her very well. Quickly, Sharon switched off the light.

"Please leave me alone, please go away and leave me alone," she said. She might now have left the bathroom and gone to wake the children, she might have run to the phone and dialed 911, but her brain seemed caught in knots. She was sobbing, she was pleading. Her bladder pinched with the need to pee.

The siege lasted forty minutes. Then, with no word, he was gone.

There stood Eva McGregor, fifty-one years old; in her high-school principal's navy-blue gabardine pants suit, frowning at her younger sister. "Sharon, you are not going back to New York tonight."

Eva spoke with the air of one accustomed to giving orders and to being obeyed. It must be an axiom, Sharon thought: adult children, especially sisters, are expected to quarrel over their parents' more valuable possessions. To be indifferent is to be unloving, unnatural. And there were plenty of these possessions—valuable and otherwise—to be sorted out before the property could be sold. That, after all, was the purpose of Sharon's visit. So she kept telling herself. It was duty, it must be done.

In the car, Eva pointedly asked Sharon what she'd done all day. Sharon murmured something vague and evasive: she'd gone for a long walk in their old neighborhood. "It must have been long," Eva said. "All those hours." Wasted hours, you could almost hear Eva say. Squandered hours.

They were headed west on Main Street in a stream of early-evening traffic. It was mid-September, a season of drought. Sharon saw out of the corner of her eye the Voigts' old house, where, a few hours before, she'd been walking. She said, offhandedly, "The Voigts. What's become of them?" Eva shrugged. Sharon said, encouragingly, "I always liked Karen. I was always jealous of you and Karen."

Eva sighed. "Karen's a nurse. We send cards. My closest friend—it all seems so long ago." The upholstery shop, she said, had gone out of business in the nineteen-eighties, as Sharon must know; they'd

had to sell. "They were considered first-rate upholsterers, the Voigts. The things they did for Mom, you'll see they've really held up. Thirty years!"

Sharon was trying to remember what those things were. Ryan Voigt hammering at an upended chair. The living-room sofa: a rich winy-dark brocaded fabric that Sharon had liked to pet, like fur. She heard herself ask Eva what had become of Karen Voigt's uncle.

Eva said, "Him! Karen's crazy uncle. He was a drunk. I think he's somewhere in Buffalo, institutionalized. Alzheimer's, I think Karen said."

"Alzheimer's! But—is he that old?"

"He was an alcoholic for years. And, yes, he's that old."

Eva parked in the driveway of the old house. Sharon stared as if, for a moment, she didn't know where she was. There was the spacious white Colonial in which the sisters had grown up. Entering the house by the rear door as they'd always done, Sharon heard katydids in the tall grass, loud as cymbals, castanets. She knew she had to guard herself: the house was filled with their things—cumbersome objects and useless memories. She was thinking of Ryan Voigt, how his fingers had tugged at her hair, how he'd made a crude pinching gesture at her breasts and a joke about crab apples. Outside the bathroom, in the bushes, he'd urinated noisily. He'd wanted her to hear, and she'd heard. Sharon had never told anyone what happened that night at the Voigts'. But she never babysat for the Voigts again. She'd ceased trailing after Eva and Karen. And she'd never again entered the upholstery shop, or heard the brass bell jingle overhead.

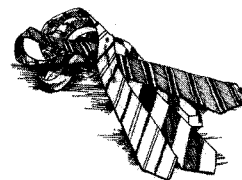
Well, Sharon had glimpsed Ryan Voigt a few times afterward. Once, home from college, she'd seen him on the street in downtown Yewville, big-bodied, ruddy-faced, with that look of a swerving vehicle, and possibly he'd seen her, but hadn't recognized her because she'd changed so much, or hadn't let on he'd recognized her. Flushed with excitement at being home, knowing herself at the age of nineteen or twenty to be so much more than Ryan Voigt could ever have guessed, she'd actually lifted a hand to wave at him, whether in sincerity or mockery she couldn't have said. But Ryan Voigt had already been turning away, disappearing into the noontime crowd. ♦

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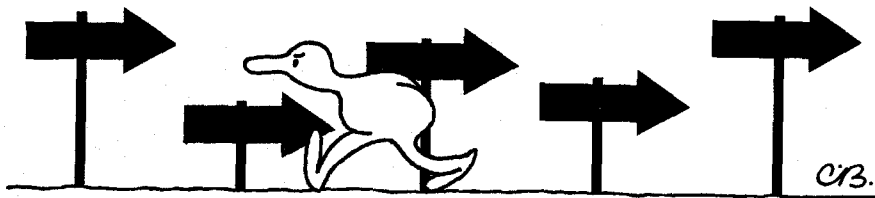
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THE CRITICS



IN FASHION

SWANN SONG

Yves Saint Laurent bids adieu.

BY JUDITH THURMAN

Of all the garments I have loved and lost, there is one whose perfection gave me such happiness that I've spent decades hoping it will surface in some thrift shop, and when I'm in Paris I never fail to check at the Père Lachaise of couture, Didier Ludot's grimly glamorous little resale boutique in the Palais Royal. This first deluxe, not to say decent, piece of clothing that I ever owned was a sable-brown Cossack-style maxiskirt by Yves Saint Laurent that zipped up both sides like a sleeping bag. It was made of thick alpaca blanket wool, lined in black silk, and ingeniously constructed without darts so that, despite its weight, it had no bulk at the hips or waist. I bought it in 1969 at the Rive Gauche boutique on Bond Street, in London, which had been inaugurated with great fanfare that year by Princess Margaret and was managed very profitably by a former fashion journalist named Lady Rendlesham. Saint Laurent has always had a penchant for aristocratic sales help.

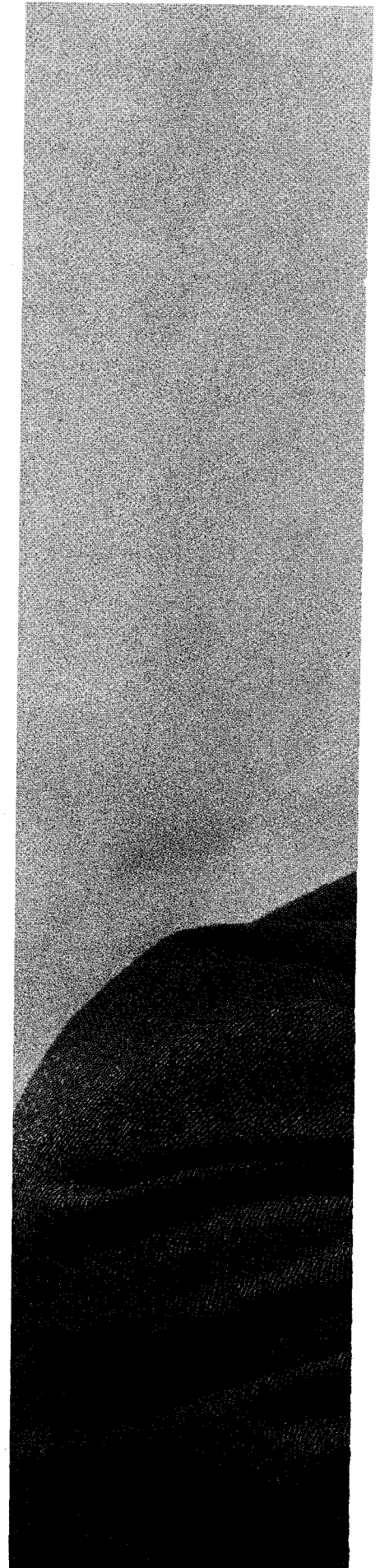
While he didn't invent designer ready-to-wear—Pierre Cardin did—Saint Laurent was the first couturier to make a cult of it, associating the cachet of an exalted label with a line of factory-made clothing and accessories of high quality and audacious chic (he designed them himself, at least for a while) that were marketed globally to a hip, baby-boom clientele. "The Rive

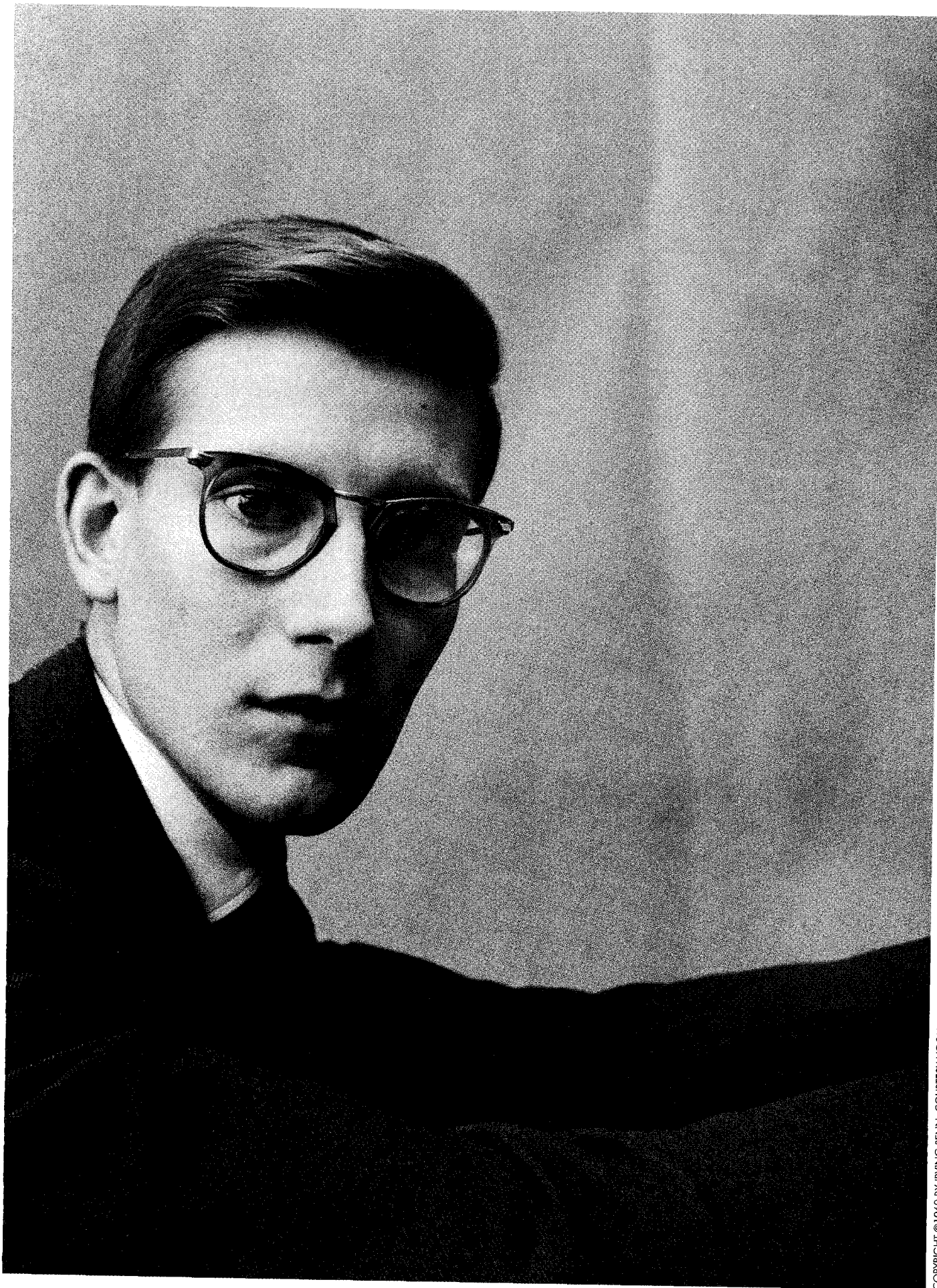
Gauche notion of luxury had less to do with money than with attitude," Laurence Benaïm writes in her authoritative biography of Saint Laurent, which was published in France in 1993. Benaïm also notes that in 1966, when the Rive Gauche line was launched, the ready-to-wear prices were about a tenth of the couture. But a tenth of the unthinkable was still hard for me to imagine. Except for my youth, and an inclination toward idolatry, I was hardly the target Rive Gauche customer, and I have never, unfortunately, had a Saint Laurent body—leggy and broad-shouldered, with the flat hips, shortish waist, and high, shapely haunches and bosom of the African and Caribbean models he was among the first to employ. At the time, though, I was grateful for the mercy of a long skirt: ruthless minis were the rule. I was also thrilled to have something so certifiably Parisian in a closet filled with the picturesque ethnic frippery that is back in style this year, but which stank of the embroidered sheepskin coat from Afghanistan that I'd bought in an open-air stall next to Gandalf's Garden off the King's Road. Badly cured hippie fur, patchouli, diesel exhaust, mildew, hashish rolled with stale tobacco, maté, and paraffin heating oil are the scents that summon up my remembrance of the late sixties.

I was then writing wine-dark Plathian poetry in a bed-sit with imitation

PHOTOGRAPH BY IRVING PENN

Yves Saint Laurent, New York, 1957.



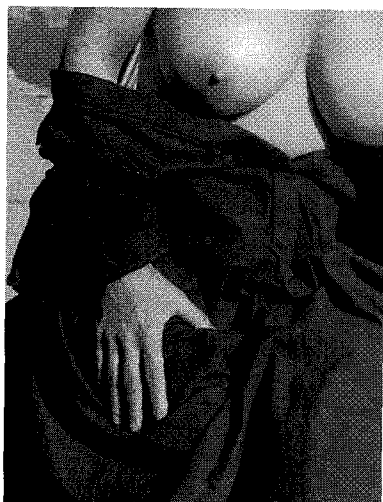


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MANUEL ALVAREZ BRAVO NUDES

introduction by Carlos Fuentes



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"Stop—or I'll have a heart attack!"

William Morris wallpaper facing a garage south of the river, and paying my rent by tutoring a Hollywood mogul's eleven-year-old son in Berkeley Square. When my pupil's English lesson was finished, the butler served us tea, a repast at which we were supposed to speak French. Since teatime was off the meter, I felt entitled to wrap up whatever solid refreshments we hadn't consumed to take home, and I confess that, in addition to scones and sandwiches, I sometimes also pocketed a handful of raw brown sugar lumps, and on the way to the tube station, which, like Rive Gauche, was on Bond Street, I would eat them furtively, like stolen candy. One Friday, I noticed a discreet "final reductions" sign in the shopwindow, which emboldened me to cross its intimidatingly smart threshold for the first time. The carpet, as I recall, was the color of a blood orange, and there were little mauve chairs, and futuristic lighting, and a black-and-white portrait of Himself in the style of "Blow-Up." Not much was left on the sale rack, but the marvelously refined skirt with its cavalry swaggar and feline nap had been marked down to fifteen pounds—one of its zippers was "as seen." I had a week's pay in my pocket: fifteen pounds. Many of my romances would begin, like this one, as a

chance encounter sparked by an obscure hunger, a neat coincidence, and a fatal attraction for the defective. That is how I joined the ranks of *celles qui s'adonnent à Yves Saint Laurent* (in the words of the 1977 ad for his perfume Opium—a publicity campaign that was widely protested as pro-drug and anti-Asian): one of those women addicted to Yves Saint Laurent.

On January 7th of this year, reading from a prepared speech in a gravelly whisper, Saint Laurent, who is sixty-five, announced his retirement. The Spring 2002 haute-couture show would be his last, taking the form of a retrospective. His forty-four years in fashion had, he said, been haunted by aesthetic phantoms. "I have grappled with anguish and I have been through sheer hell. . . . I have known those fair-weather friends we call tranquillizers and drugs. I have known the prison of depression and the confinement of a hospital. But one day I was able to come through all of that, dazzled yet sober. It was Marcel Proust who taught me that 'the magnificent and pitiful family of the hypersensitive are the salt of the earth.'"

French television provided live coverage of this rare and emotional press

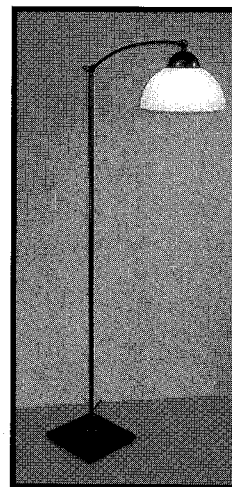
conference, which generated nearly as much nasty backbiting as it did fulsome piety. The fashion press scrambled to compose its tributes. The funereal windows of Didier Ludot were promptly dressed with vintage Saint Laurent, and so, with a brighter, mod flair, were the windows of the Galeries Lafayette, the vast department store that occupies two square blocks behind the Opéra Garnier. Grasset reissued Benaïm's biography, and bookstores on both banks also gave prominence to a six-pound coffee-table tome of film stills ("Yves Saint Laurent: 5, Avenue Marceau"; Abrams; \$49.95) from a documentary made by David Teboul, who spent three months with his crew in Saint Laurent's atelier. Teboul's made-for-television hagiography, Warholian in *longueur* but without the consolation of sex, brutality, or weirdness, was to be screened at the Centre Pompidou on January 22nd, immediately following the Saint Laurent couture show, and, later in the week, on television. It should have been called "Merci, Monsieur," the refrain of its dialogue. The ash grows longer on the master's cigarette as he labors over his sketchpad. His French bulldog, Moujik, dismembers a stuffed toy. His muse, model, and collaborator Loulou de la Falaise, the director of YSL accessories, unfurls a bolt of matronly flowered chifon and drapes it on a stoic model. (La Falaise has always been the quintessential Rive Gauche *haute bohémienne*, and her 1977 wedding to Thadée Klossowski, the younger son of Balthus—a party hosted by Saint Laurent at the Chalet des Îles in the Bois de Boulogne—was, notes Benaïm, the first great social stir-fry of "punks and baronesses.") A plump seamstress with a bad haircut irons the canvas lapel of what will become an exquisitely banal suit jacket. Every feeble nod or hoarse croak from the subject is received like a pontifical blessing by a tired-looking staff of aging parishioners who, except for la Falaise—a woman who flaunts her well-worn beauty with mermaid nonchalance and whose expression of ironical detachment belies her vigilant subservience—are touchingly unglamorous. But Teboul's homage is perhaps more revealing than it was meant to be. It leaves the impression that 5, Avenue Marceau is less a couture atelier than a mad king's

private theatre where the actors conspire, elaborately, to humor his fantasies.

The backbiting in the press was encouraged, in part, by Pierre Bergé—Saint Laurent's formidably astute business partner and ex-lover, who has, for four decades, sheltered the master from the unpleasant realities of accounts payable. Saint Laurent has always maintained that he has no precise idea how much money he has; he just knows there's enough to permit him to decorate beautiful houses and collect precious things. In 1994, when Bergé was being investigated for insider trading (he was cleared the next year), the judge accepted Saint Laurent's convincing protestations of fiscal imbecility. In 1993, Bergé had sold the YSL ready-to-wear business to the pharmaceutical and cosmetics giant Sanofi, which, in a complicated deal with the luxury mogul François Pinault, resold it two years ago for a billion dollars to the Gucci Group. Domenico De Sole, Gucci's chief executive, confided the design of the Rive Gauche line to the dashing American Tom Ford. After a tepid start, Ford has, with lots of grommeting, whipstitching, ruching, animal prints, peasant ruffles, and skin-tight leather, begun to make it profitably decadent again (though not too kinky for the American market). Since the turn of the millennium, most of the "Saint Laurents" featured in the glossies or worn by celebrities to awards ceremonies have been the pretender's handiwork. This has understandably rankled the royalists. After the press conference, Bergé announced with a flash of Nixonian bitterness that the game of haute couture was finished because the player with the marbles was packing them up and going home.

The crowd outside the Centre Pompidou, in the Place Beaubourg, on the night of January 22nd was behaving as if there were a Prada warehouse sale inside rather than the retrospective of a great designer's lifework. Two thousand of the elect held tickets, five hundred of them for standing room, which everyone knew meant three hours on one's feet. The flood surge of bodies when the doors finally opened was terrifying, and it's a miracle that none of Saint Laurent's original couture clients—a beautifully wrought, hand-painted set of tiny

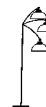
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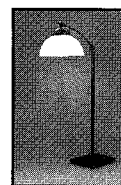


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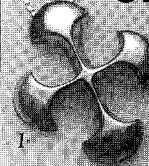
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porcelain old-lady dolls—got trampled to death. The publicists themselves had been so mobbed by importunate style faxers begging for a seat that they'd stopped answering the phones. I had been told there would be absolutely no admission without an invitation corresponding to the name and gender on one's passport, but it was impossible to disengage a limb from the crush, much less a document.

More than one guest who made it past the barricades was secretly gratified by the rumor, later confirmed, that Gwyneth Paltrow—a fixture, with bodyguards and camera-ready pancake makeup, at every other couture event—had, among other upstart celebrities, been turned away. It was a show of loyalty on both sides: creator's and audience's. Jeanne Moreau, Lauren Bacall, Bianca Jagger, Paloma Picasso, Nan Kempner, Diane von Furstenberg, Betty Catroux, and, of course, Catherine Deneuve, muse and spokeswoman for the house—who first became addicted to Saint Laurent when he dressed her for “Belle de Jour”—shared a front row with three French first ladies, an Arab princess, and the designer's mother. Jean-Paul Gaultier's platinum buzz cut and Sonia Rykiel's electrostatic carotene pageboy glowed in the dark. Hubert de Givenchy was conspicuous for his height and distinction. Vivienne Westwood, in

clashing plaids and matching red hair, teetered off on platform stilettos to find a ladies' room. Many of the spectators were wearing a treasured piece of YSL, though I assume that none of them except me, ever the bargain-hunter, had bought her early-seventies décolleté tuxedo jacket—structured shoulders, tapered waist, jet buttons—at the Council Thrift Shop on East Eighty-fourth Street. Outside in the cobbled square, under a light drizzle, a battalion of well-armed riot policemen with rakish berets nervously scanned a huge throng of fashion fundamentalists, some weeping, who watched the simulcast on giant screens.

After a predictably interminable delay, the epic défilé began unfurling to a soundtrack of the Beatles, African drums, Callas, Mozart, jazz, and the Stones. A hundred and seven “girls” modelled three hundred archival designs, beginning with a breezy peacoat and wide-legged white trousers from 1962. The stream of vintage creations was punctuated, erratically, by some forty outfits for Spring 2002, including a suite of draped chiffon gowns in opaline colors (ravishing, though their novelty was imperceptible). The finale was a cortège of sixty tuxedos impossible to date but representing every conceivable variation: cropped, skirted, slim, padded, flared, strict, high-waisted, pleated, racy, flat-

hipped, classic. The majority of the models had been culled from this season's crop of inhumanly lovely teenagers, although Naomi Campbell and Claudia Schiffer, magnificently sullen and goofy, respectively, who rarely work the catwalk anymore, consented to appear. But they were all outclassed by the womanly splendor of their elders: Mounia, Katouscha, and Jerry Hall.

Most couture shows last about twenty minutes. This one roiled on for more than an hour, in waves of staggering beauty, fauvish color, and perverse extravagance—a jacket costing half a million francs, for example, perfectly replicating van Gogh's “Irises” in seven hundred hours' worth of hand-beading by Lesage. There were sumptuously embellished tributes to other painters: Picasso, Matisse, Braque, Dali, and Warhol; to poets and writers, among them Aragon and Cocteau; and to exotic native populations—Russian moujiks, Forbidden City courtesans, Castilian matadors, and African queens. There was plenty of cerebral whimsy to offset the noirish sex play: feather minis suitable for a showgirl's wedding to a peer; a minuscule suède tunic from the sixties worn with high-heeled waders; swanky cocktail dresses that exposed a nipple; a transparent black baby-doll disco nightie trimmed with fur; quite a bit of immaculately white-collared “Belle de Jour” respectability begging to be corrupted; a strong dose of double-breasted androgyny; and a backless evening gown cut to the cleft of the buttocks, then scored with lace. But while Saint Laurent can sometimes be pedantically outré, he's never trashy. And he displayed such encyclopedic formal invention and technical virtuosity that the occasional bomb—like a series of umbrella-shaped flowered tea frocks in what looked like shower-curtain fabric, or a shapeless wool shift worn with a dowager's turban—were like a sorbet between courses rather than a disappointment.

The event itself had the gestalt of those imperial funerals that the French Republic orchestrates with elegiac pomp and poignance for its national heroes (and, much more rarely, heroines), whether they have contributed to the glory of the *patrie* with a pen or a sword—or, as in this case, a No. 2 pencil. And it was impossible to be unmoved by



"It was back in '52 that the hits stopped coming."

the pure-heartedness of Saint Laurent's love of women; or by his appearance of leonine decrepitude; or by the tragic grimace—the expression of a man walking the plank and still riven to his core by the conflicting imperatives of resistance and surrender—with which he took his final steps down the runway. The dauphin of couture had become its King Lear.

Yves Mathieu-Saint-Laurent (he dropped the Mathieu when he opened his own couture house) was born on August 1, 1936, in Oran, Algeria. His prosperous middle-class parents, Lucienne and Charles, who owned a house in town and a villa at the beach, prided themselves on employing French, rather than Arab, servants. Yves's father was an insurance executive who also managed a chain of movie theatres. His mother was a pretty and stylish provincial coquette with great legs, who, Saint Laurent says enigmatically, "is still a child." In pictures from the family albums she also looks rather terrifyingly sunny, at least from the point of view of a fragile and depressive homosexual son who identified so passionately with Proust that he sometimes travelled under the pseudonym M. Swann and of whom Bergé has said, "He was born with a nervous breakdown." But she encouraged his precocious talents, even to the point of letting him cut up her clothes to make rag dolls, and when he was fourteen or fifteen and had begun to design ensembles influenced by Dior and Balenciaga for her and his two younger sisters, she paid a local dress-maker to run them up.

One of the most eloquent photographs of the neurasthenic aesthete as a young man is an all-boy class portrait that seems to date from his last year at the Lycée Lamoricière, in Oran, and for which he has removed his glasses. Whether or not his fellow-students are as cocky and virile as they look, it is painfully obvious that the wraith in the back row, out of focus, twenty pounds thinner than the pompadoured, *pied-noir* Romeos on either side, is an alien object of locker-room contempt, and perhaps of abuse. Even Proust managed to survive his military service, but when Mathieu-Saint-Laurent, Yves, was drafted into the Army, in 1960, at the height of the Algerian war, and sen-

tenced once again to the torture of a barracks full of straight boys, it shattered him so badly that he was confined in the isolation ward of a military hospital, where the doctors tranquillized him into a stupor. A common enough story: so many of those dreamy, provincial child outcasts who become the somebodies of art and literature are first driven to mobilize their powers by an urgent necessity to be somebody else.

Saint Laurent arrived in Paris for the first time in December of 1953, with his chic mother, having won third prize in the dress category of a design competition sponsored by the International Wool Secretariat. (The next year he came in first. Karl Lagerfeld took top honors in the coat category.) Through his parents' connections, he met Michel de Brunhoff, who was the editor of French *Vogue* and an intimate friend of Dior. De Brunhoff encouraged the promising teen-ager to study at the school run by the Chambre Syndicale de la Couture, which he did briefly. Two years later, the editor was impressed, indeed "flabbergasted," by the prowess and sophistication of a fashion portfolio that Yves, now eighteen, had brought back to Paris from his villégiature in Oran. It included some sketches of an A-line dress—a shape that Dior was working on but hadn't yet shown except to de Brunhoff, who now persuasively recommended his protégé to the man who, in 1947, had created the voluminously skirted, wasp-waisted New Look that revived the morale of the fashion world and, with it, the postwar French economy. Saint Laurent's first coup as an assistant at the House of Dior was a graphically arresting black evening gown with long sleeves, a décolleté nicked like a rifle sight, and an episcopal-looking sash of white taffeta. Carmel Snow featured this dress in the 1955 fall fashion issue of *Harper's Bazaar*, photographed by Avedon on a model who was herself as elegant as a calligrapher's brushstroke. Her name was Dovima. He posed her at the Cirque d'Hiver, with two elephants.

A year later, Dior, who was only fifty-two, died of a heart attack at the Italian spa where he had gone for his annual weight loss and liver cure, defying the advice of his astrologer, who'd warned him that the trip boded ill. Marcel Bousac, the textile magnate who owned the

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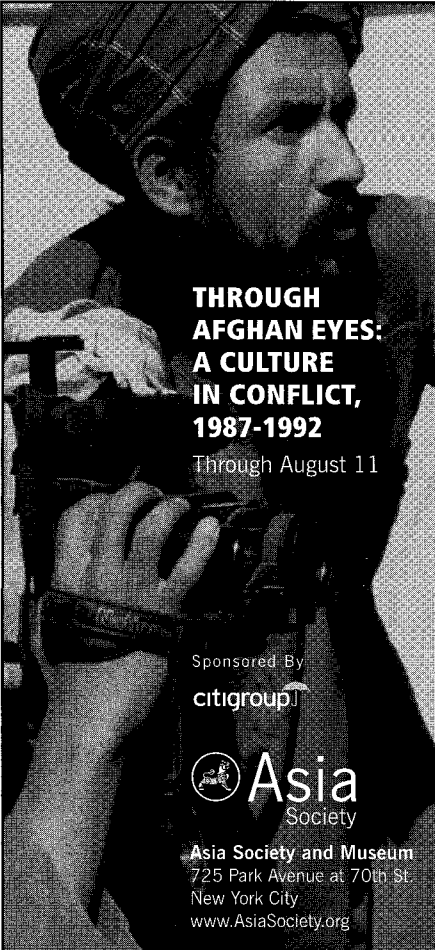
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couture house, briefly considered shutting it down before deciding to give Dior's "preferred assistant" a shot. Saint Laurent's first collection, the Trapeze, presented in January of 1958, was greeted with delirious acclaim on both sides of the Atlantic. I have always believed, heretically, that the Trapeze—while flattering to the trapezoidal bodies of women in advanced stages of pregnancy—was just a couture version of the muumuu. But both the originals and the Ohrbach's copies sold briskly and made their obscure twenty-one-year-old creator a *Life* coverboy.

Saint Laurent's youth, his mother told Benaïm, "ceased abruptly in 1958," when the embalming fluid of celebrity started flowing in his veins. "In achieving his oldest dreams," the biographer continues, "he closed the door on his life. Yves becomes a purveyor of illusions." The flimsiest but most seductive and persistent of those illusions, which the women's-wear industry now treats as a sacred truth, is that the essence of being in fashion is to live dangerously. Poor, addled Talitha Getty, one of Yves's millionaire junkie friends from Marrakesh and an early muse—who once posed on her roof in the medina wearing a Rive Gauchiste caftan and a ring on every finger and died at thirty-one of a heroin overdose, orphaning her toddler son—has been cited by a number of young designers as their inspiration for Fall 2002. Saint Laurent's own epic bingeing and self-imposed quarantine from reality begin here. "I had to request an audience in order to see him," a friend recalls.

Before Saint Laurent was drafted into the Army and cracked up, there were six collections for the Dior label—not all of them, Benaïm notes, gratifying to the expectations of his backers and fans. The comfy but erotically challenged "sack dress" inspired innumerable cartoons. The hobble skirt was unpopular with couture clients, who had to disrobe in order to use a toilet. A series of jewel- and lace-encrusted evening gowns that paid homage to Goya's infantas were so ornate that critics complained about the Dior *femme relique*—the woman mummified by her opulence. But there was also a biker's jacket, the *blouson noir*; an early "car coat"; and a regal wedding gown for the new Em-

press of Iran, Farah Diba. "Saint Laurent designs for women who lead double lives," Catherine Deneuve once said astutely, and these tentative experiments express the contradictory impulses that he would continue so masterfully to explore. He drew upon the vocabulary of proletarian work clothes and menswear, radically simplifying a woman's wardrobe and purging it of its fussy, bourgeois gestures. He replaced the tailored blouse under a suit jacket with a "see-through" chiffon halter, a T-shirt, or nothing. He gave women sporty pockets for their Miltowns and cigarettes. But he also perceived that tribal fetish worship, the past and its splendors, the Orient and its mysteries, the art world and its sacrileges, the underground, the flea market, the souk, the steppes, and the gay demimonde were all ripe for creative plunder. Saint Laurent was the designer who, in 1971, with his widely execrated but enduringly influential "Libération" collection (the title refers not to the liberation of women but to the Liberation of France in 1944), invented "retro" in the form of, among other beguilingly updated throwbacks, an absinthe-green fox chubby. Proust taught him well: art, elegance, snobbery, nostalgia, and vice distilled with supreme purity make an eau-de-vie that goes straight to the head.

The Army doctors had told Saint Laurent that he would be subject to "relapses" of his malaise. Discharged to the care of his lover, he and Bergé "honeymooned" in the Canary Islands. Meanwhile, Marcel Boussac, unhappy with his dauphin's performance, had installed Marc Bohan on Dior's throne. Bergé sued for breach of contract and won a settlement. An American investor named J. Mack Robinson (who was pointed out to me at the retrospective, proudly sitting in the second row) committed seven hundred thousand dollars to the founding of Yves Saint Laurent Couture, and in December of 1961 the partners opened their house on the Rue Spontini. Chanel was, at the same moment, back in business on the Rue Cambon. The jewelry designer Robert Goossens once compared the old queen of fashion to its Young Turk by noting that Chanel embodied Bergé and Saint Laurent in one.

In a television interview broadcast in 1968, Chanel anointed Saint Laurent as her spiritual heir (though there is some question as to whether they ever actually met), and in his farewell press conference he paid homage to the predecessor "who taught me so much, and who, as we all know, liberated women. It was this that enabled me, years later . . . to liberate fashion." But the notion that any revolution can be concluded or claimed as a definitive victory is itself a relic of the past. What Chanel liberated was the natural line of the body, which entailed, as most liberations do, a new form of tyranny—the oppressive maintenance of a svelte, toned silhouette. Hers is the virile glamour of renunciation. She freed women to dress with the sobriety and nonchalance of English gentlemen, though she stopped short of putting them into trousers. That was Saint Laurent's claim to immortality. He showed his first tailored pants in 1962, and went on to commandeer other staples of a gentleman's and an officer's wardrobe: the business suit, the jumpsuit, the peacoat, the short, the trenchcoat, the motorcycle jacket, the safari jacket, and, most famously, the tuxedo. Yet, for all his often proclaimed debt to the "street," he was more romantic than Chanel was about the rich—she who slept her way out of poverty. And as a gay man, or perhaps simply as a man, he was more sentimental than she was about femininity. Indeed, no one has been so religiously galling toward women or resistant to the temptation of modern fashion to make clothes as difficult, ironic, contemptuous, or ugly as modern art. Saint Laurent takes it upon himself to anticipate every potential humiliation in the bulge of a seam, the pucker of a pleat, the mockery of a bow. His cutting and drapery are a lover's discourse with the female body.

Bergé has been calling Saint Laurent "the last couturier" for years, at least since the time of his retrospective at the Metropolitan Museum in 1983. Even

then the vitality of his great work—his legacy—was behind him. The only news that he delivered this January was at the press conference. But the pathos of his eclipse is proportional to the radiance of his imagination and the supreme good fortune of his timing. He came of age as an artist at the moment everything changed. With all the talent in the world, it isn't possible to be a Saint Laurent today—any more than it's possible to be an Elvis—even if one is Saint Laurent.

On the morning after the Beaubourg show, *Le Monde* published a brief interview that the designer, who was declining interviews, gave to Laurence Benaïm. "What motivated the announcement of your retirement?" she asked him. "We are living in a world of disorder and decadence," he replied. "The struggle for elegance and beauty has been causing me much sadness. . . . I have been feeling marginal and alone." There was something so ingenuous about this remark, as if the speaker had just awakened from a coma to perceive the disarray of Western civilization, that I thought of Proust's last scenes, in which the Narrator returns to Paris after his long wartime convalescence in a nursing home and discovers that the world of the salons is a grotesque and degraded parody of all that he remembers. But then he is introduced to a young girl, Gilberte's daughter—Swann's grandchild—a tall beauty of sixteen, "rich in hopes," "a masterpiece . . . formed from those very years which I myself had lost." And this encounter permits him to understand that "the cruel law of art is that people die . . . after exhausting every form of suffering, so that over our heads may grow the grass not of oblivion but of eternal life [upon which] gaily and without a thought for those who are sleeping beneath them, future generations may come to enjoy their *déjeuner sur l'herbe*." I can't think of a more hopeful insight to reconcile one with the "magnificent and pitiful" family picnic that is the fashion world. But Saint Laurent couldn't know about, and therefore take heart from, Marcel's moment of existential truth because, he told Benaïm, he's never finished reading "In Search of Lost Time." Perhaps now he will. ♦



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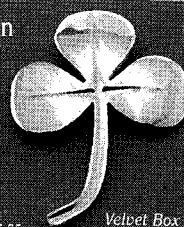
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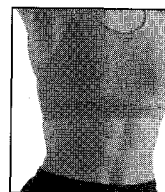
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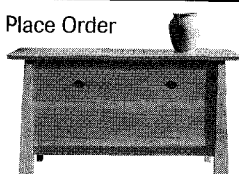
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RAW DEALS

The seductive brutalities of poker.

BY JOSEPH EPSTEIN

In the neighborhood where I grew up, in Chicago, not knowing that a straight beats three of a kind was a greater handicap than not knowing how to parallel-park or that the sum of the length of two sides of any triangle is greater than the length of the third. Poker was endemic, as a pastime, a sport, a passion. My mother played in an all-women's

less than a month's rent—a defeat that rather took the edge off my appetite for that night's meal. But poker remained the main game, providing chance in its purest form and to its highest power, gambling both simple and subtle, in which the elements of luck, skill, and character intermingle in endless and, for those hooked on it, fascinating combination.

no such thing as a friendly poker game, at least among players of any sophistication. The idea behind poker is to defeat everyone else at the table, sending as many of them as possible home in so advanced a state of despair that they will question the judgment of their parents in conceiving them. Such have long been my inchoate feelings about the game of poker, and it is pleasing to find many of them reinforced and nicely reformulated by Andy Bellin's "Poker Nation" (HarperCollins; \$23.95).

Bellin describes himself as a semi-pro poker player. By this he seems to mean that though he may not play for a living, like a real pro, his absorption in the game is nearly complete. He plays poker most nights, letting the game with its odd hours give a distinctive rhythm to his quotidian



The atmosphere in underground poker clubs is even less salubrious than in the average casino.

afternoon game and an all-women's evening one. The phrase "a four-flusher" was no mere cliché but bristled with genuine contempt for the sort of person who didn't have the goods. Five of my boyhood friends used to stop off at our apartment on a Saturday afternoon when we were thirteen for penny poker, nickel limit, and a few smokes before heading off to learn intricate, and now long forgotten, fox-trot steps at biweekly dance lessons.

In West Rogers Park, in the early nineteen-fifties, we also played blackjack, gin rummy, in-between, and a game called pot luck, which had a dangerous built-in escalation factor. In my junior year in high school, I once lost a hundred and ten dollars after school and before dinner playing pot luck, at a time when this was not much

Poker may be the only card game that cannot be played without a stake: money, most obviously, but in a pinch cigarettes (as in prison), toothpicks, or wooden matches will do. Without a stake, poker doesn't quite rise to the level of boring: to stir interest, one has not only to beat someone but to beat him out of something. In itself the game is almost too rudimentary. Add a few players of differing temperaments, a stake preferably a bit (or, better, a lot) more than the players can afford to lose, and the juices begin to flow.

So strongly does poker arouse competitive emotions that the list of now well-established oxymorons—"honest used-car dealer," "military justice," "responsible intellectual"—should, I believe, be expanded to include "friendly poker game." There is

life, and finds his most intense emotions, high and low, at the card table. Bellin claims to have once lost nine thousand four hundred and ten dollars in a single pot, certainly a professional-sounding number. But a poker player should not be self-deceived, and when it comes to his own standing among the most serious players Bellin isn't. "By the time I wrote this book," he reports, "I had decided that I wasn't ever going to be good enough to play poker professionally. I'd never get to be one of the big boys." During the course of "Poker Nation," he explains why.

To understand the difference between poker at Bellin's level and that of the true professional, one cannot do better than consult A. Alvarez's nineteen-year-old but recently reissued "The Biggest Game

SEYMOUR CHWAST

in Town" (Chronicle; \$15.95), an excellent account of some of the leading players in the annual World Series of Poker at Binion's Horseshoe casino, in Las Vegas. The pros have developed a fine indifference to money. These men—and a few women who have now joined the ranks of professionals—have astounding mental stamina, an instinct for everything that is going on at a poker table, an ability to endure the pressure of continual high risk, and a clairvoyance about an opponent's unrevealed cards which approaches that of the Amazing Kreskin. "It is a question not just of a different level of skill but of a different ordering of reality," Alvarez writes of the great poker pros. Bellin, too, is immensely respectful of the true professionals. After all, unlike professional athletes, they risk their own money—something, as he remarks, that Tiger Woods does not. He recognizes that he hasn't their skill for reading other players, or their predator's instinct, and that no matter how much he played he would never acquire, as one of Alvarez's pros puts it, the "alligator blood in his veins."

"Poker Nation" is a mixture of memoir, sociological study, and instructional manual. As a report on the underground poker clubs in New York—Bellin says that in the late nineteen-nineties between twenty and thirty such clubs operated in the five boroughs—the book brings us news of a world most of us are unlikely to know. Bellin does not pretend that his chosen milieu is attractive, but he has no wish to inhabit any other. "Poker Nation" is an invitation to the lower depths, with a high-spirited, genial screw-off for our Virgil.

Andy Bellin grew up as that fairly standard figure the bright boy who is a bad student. He was dyslexic and insomniac, and in high school used eyeliner as an attention-getting device. Born into the upper middle class—his father is a physician—he went to Vassar and then graduate school at Wesleyan, where he dropped out of the astrophysics program so as not to be flunked out. He claims that "for most of my early twenties I was nothing more than a grab bag of various insecurities and emotional afflictions." He tells us that he is short—"5'8" on a warm day"—has a receding hairline, keeps a Newfoundland dog, and is a disappointment to his father. He says, rather coyly, that gambling "has ruined every relationship I have had in my life but one." He confesses that, at vari-

ous times, he has cheated at cards, even when he didn't need the money. "I used to play poker because I had a hard time holding down a regular job," he writes. Poker was the first thing he was good at that he also liked; and when he first entered a casino, he says, he "had never felt so at home any place in my whole life."

Strange place to feel at home. In the underground clubs where Bellin has been playing, the poker culture is even less attractive than that of the average casino. Underground poker clubs have the lure of the illicit. The game's vivid, rhythmic language adds to the attraction. Bellin provides a rich glossary of poker terms: "gut shot" for pulling an inside straight; "a Broadway" for an ace-high straight; "quads" for four of a kind; "six tits" for three queens; "Siegfried & Roy" for two queens; "the nuts" for the highest possible hand on the table. Various creeps wend in and out of his pages: an Episcopal minister who cheats, a shrink who cannot bear to lose, bright young men trying to elude dull jobs and even duller lives, all looking for a little edge in a room reeking of smoke and wretched hygiene. Worst of all may be the men who eke out a living at the game, never departing the groove of dull probability, doing nothing imaginative, measuring their progress not by a night's profits but by a year's, arriving at the poker table evening after dreary evening as if it were a job at the post office. Bellin offers an extended account of the career of one such player, a regular at his favorite club. The man says that he has resorted to taking drugs in order to relieve the crushing monotony of poker played only for percentages. He calls the game, played his way, "a total grind."

Anyone who has played poker with some earnestness will find Bellin most interesting in his pedagogical emphasis. He expends several pages on methods of cheating, including the use of shells by the house at casinos and clubs, card marking, deck-stacking methods, and players teaming up and signalling each other at the same table. Bellin says that deductive reasoning will take one a fairly long way in poker. So, too, will memory, concentration, stamina, and rapidly applied mathematics-based logic. But all these things, even cumulatively, do not guarantee victory. The law of averages is all very well, but it suffers the deficiency of not working itself out in a single night. Nor do the cards know—or seem much to

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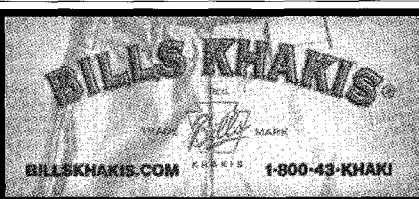
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care—to whom they are being dealt. One of the most frustrating poker games I have ever played in was a seven-handed game in which far and away the worst player at the table, on an astonishing rush, with strong hand after strong hand dealt him, won pot after pot; too ignorant to understand when he was being brilliantly bluffed, he cleaned us all out. Good players always beat less good players over the long haul, but in poker the short haul can kill you.

Bellin refers to himself as a poker junkie, but whether his love of the game is genuinely an addiction isn't quite clear. Gamblers Anonymous comes in for brief mention in his pages, but he scamps the question of whether he is himself an addict, and instead recounts the misadventures of a young Korean with a J.D.-M.B.A. whose compulsive gambling eventually leads him to start betting away a client's money. He is now, Bellin reports, "a wanted fugitive in the state of New York." In a gambling addiction, one tends to bet on anything—from the gestation period of a gerbil to differing lengths of two paper clips. The stories at Gamblers Anonymous, like those at meetings of Alcoholics Anonymous, are about weakness, betrayal, personal failure—except that there are more manicures, pinkie rings, and charm among the gamblers than among the drinkers. At a meeting I attended (as a journalist, not an addict) years ago in the basement of a church on Lawrence Avenue in Chicago, a young guy, hair over his ears and wearing a buttery-soft leather jacket, stood up to announce that we were looking at the man who single-handedly stopped the thirty-three-game winning streak of the Los Angeles Lakers by betting on them.

"There are certain universal truths about human nature that translate directly to the card table," Bellin writes. "Take any cliché about the human psyche, and you will find something that applies to the poker players." My own sense is that, while poker reflects human nature, it does not bring out the best in it. Rather the reverse: it calls up, out of the not so vasty deep, greed, delight in deception, and pleasure in domination.

For some among us, these pleasures lessen over time. In my own late twenties, I began to discover that I not only retained my intense dislike of losing but increasingly felt a diminution of satisfac-

tion in winning. The world outside the finite game of poker came to seem far more interesting than anything going on at the table. I began to lose my patience for poker, and this threw off my timing, my instinct for knowing when to make decisive moves. Soon the company at the table began to bore me a dark Matisse-blue.

In poker, Bellin writes, "it helps to think of two armies facing each other on a battlefield." The serious players, moreover, like to go at it without any stuffy rules handed down by the card-playing equivalent of the Geneva Convention. In an ostensibly friendly poker game, one cannot raise after checking instead of betting, but at the poker clubs and at Vegas one can raise after a check, thus committing the impolite, but deeply gratifying, act known as "sandbagging," or hitting the other players from a direction they hadn't anticipated. Playing for table stakes or allowing no-limit betting, like unlimited warfare, might be considered the equivalent in cards of warring with nuclear weapons, the first intermediate, the second full-out intercontinental ballistic missiles.

Professional players are agreed that the real dividing line among poker players is aggression, the instinct for the jugular. A conscience, at least at the table, probably isn't much help, either. "If you think about it logically," Bellin writes, "anyone playing poker is trying to deceive his opponents." And, I would add, exploit their weaknesses, conceal one's own, and one way or another efficiently and effectively crush all comers. Not, over all, a game for delicate souls.

Consider bluffing, without which poker would possess the fascination of ironing. A good player may bluff only once, perhaps twice, in an eight-hour session, but without this weapon of potential deception one may as well toss in the cards and wager on thumb wrestling. Both making bluffs and seeing them are among the higher refinements of the game. Bellin supplies an excellent chapter on "tells," those little mannerisms—tics, twitches, fiddling with one's cards or chips, eye movements, and many other bits of involuntary body language—that give away the true strength of a player's hand. (His own brother, a solid player, Bellin recounts, is utterly cool when bluffing, but his hands shake when he has winning cards.) There is something profoundly dismaying about having been bluffed out of a rich pot; it establishes, for

everyone at the table to witness, your want of sound judgment, psychological penetration, courage—even before a small audience, it's quite a large humiliation.

Since Andy Bellin is neither a brute nor a social Darwinian holding aces wired, what is the attraction of the game and its setting for him? I would say that he has been taken in by the romance of liberty—or, more precisely, the fantasy of freedom—that full-time poker playing provides. Bellin fits the profile of the gambler as a talented person who is nonetheless unsuccessful, smart yet unable to fit into the conventional workaday world. The gambling life allows such a person to feel that he is outside the system, and incorporates a number of masculine ideals not often met in ordinary life. The notion of being beholden to no one—boss, family, lover—is vastly appealing, and gambling for a living implies fearlessness and an absence of pettiness. Neither real nor realizable, what we are actually talking about here is a movie role, best played by Clark Gable with a name like Blacky Thurston in the setting of turn-of-the-last-century San Francisco.

For those of us who, at one time or another in our lives, have indulged this fantasy, some of the memories can be sweet. I can recall sleeping the solid, satisfying sleep of one upon whom fortune has not frowned when I was a boy of seventeen after substantial winnings in an all-night poker game at the apartment of one Dicky (the Owl) Levinson, at 3800 North Lake Shore Drive, in Chicago. In the Army, I remember taking six fellow-soldiers out to enjoy the delights, such as they were, of Fort Smith, Arkansas, with what was, in fact, their own money, lost to me over the previous six weeks in nightly poker games.

"Top of the world" is the phrase that begins to describe these feelings. Yet dull wisdom insists that one can't stay up there for long, before, in the normal course of the gambling life, loss, sadness, and squalor kick in, which they inevitably will. Andy Bellin closes on a note of exultation, and on the last page of his book pulls in a large pot against a superior player. Will he someday be forced to recognize that in the end one does best to settle for the unmanufactured thrills thrown up by life? They may arrive less regularly, but the stakes, he is likely to discover, turn out to be much higher and the game a hell of a lot less predictable. ♦

BRIEFLY NOTED

"A Problem from Hell": America and the Age of Genocide, by *Samantha Power* (Basic; \$30). In the wake of the Holocaust, United States policymakers have been rhetorically committed to the idea of preventing genocide, and yet they have consistently failed to back up their words with actions. Although Power begins her magisterial chronicle of failure with the Turkish extermination of the Armenians during the First World War, she concentrates on America's recent reluctance to intervene in the mass slaughter of civilians in Iraq, Bosnia, and Rwanda. She argues that had the U.S. done so—particularly in Bosnia and Rwanda—it could have averted the murder of tens or hundreds of thousands; instead, geopolitical considerations, indifference, and worries over domestic support trumped American ideals. Though clearly imbued with a sense of outrage, Power is judicious in her portraits of those who opposed intervention, and keenly aware of the perils and costs of military action. Her indictment of U.S. policy is therefore all the more damning.

Number9Dream, by *David Mitchell* (Random House; \$24.95). Mitchell's new novel has been described as a cross between Don DeLillo and William Gibson, and although that's a perfectly serviceable cocktail-party formula, it doesn't do justice to this odd, fitfully compelling work. Eiji Miyake, the young protagonist, leaves his rural Japanese home and travels to Tokyo to find the father who abandoned him years before. What begins as a fairly straightforward filial quest soon devolves into a kaleidoscopic adventure filled with Japanese mobsters and increasingly baroque futuristic scenarios. What is even more alarming, Eiji does not always maintain a firm grasp on reality. Mitchell's pyrotechnics are never less than interesting, but they are often less than satisfying; giddy with the fantastical possibilities of his narrative, he sometimes forgets his responsibility to his readers.



Red Water, by *Judith Freeman* (Pantheon; \$24). Unlike most historical novels, this one, which opens with a man's execution, doesn't pander to contemporary values. The condemned is a charismatic Mormon leader who participated in the massacre of a hundred and twenty Gentile pioneers in 1857, and Freeman describes the crime through the reactions of three of his nineteen wives. Rachel, the eldest, remains dislikably faithful to his memory. Emma, however, comes to see her husband as self-serving, and his youngest wife, Ann, who married him at the age of thirteen, becomes Emma's unlikely emancipator. With Ann's story—that of a young woman living in the Utah wilderness with a profound sense of her own worth—the narrative soars. Readers may want to shrug off all that makes these devout women endure their existence of farmwork, housework, repeated pregnancies, jealousies, and little to call their own, but Freeman's novel makes astute points about the almost indistinguishable similarities between faith and love.

New Collected Poems, by *George Oppen*, edited by *Michael Davidson* (New Directions; \$37.95). Oppen, a Communist and an objectivist poet deeply influenced by Pound and Williams, believed that there were no ideas except in things, but he also believed, fiercely, that our relationship to things was inherently moral—"There are things / We live among 'and to see them / Is to know ourselves.'" In 1934, he published a book of stunning, elliptical lyrics about "big-Business" and American capitalism; he then fell silent for the next twenty-five years, during which he struggled to reconcile his fealty to social causes with the demands of aesthetic originality. The culmination of this struggle was his Pulitzer Prize-winning collection "Of Being Numerous," published in 1968, which, to a degree unmatched by any book of American poetry since, movingly portrays the individual in a collective world, and the everyday conflict involved in "the act of being / More than oneself."



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DANCING

THE MUSIC MAN

Mark Morris at BAM.

BY JOAN ACOCELLA

Mark Morris has said that he likes music better than dance. The mere fact that the Mark Morris Dance Group always performs to live music is remarkable. (Almost all modern-dance companies now use tape.) Then there is the matter of quality. If, of an evening in New York, you want to hear some good music, go to a Mark Morris show. Yo-Yo Ma has played for the Morris dancers. Deborah Voigt and Lorraine Hunt Lieberson have sung for them. The first time I saw Morris's "Bedtime," I missed much of the dancing because I couldn't take my eyes off Lieberson, who was declaiming Schubert's "Erlkönig" as if it were a national emergency.

For the company's recent season at the Brooklyn Academy of Music, there was music by Monteverdi, Schumann, and Bach, and it was played—the Schumann in particular—with a snap and vigor that had spectators levitating in their seats. Also for this season Morris revived two little solos, "Bijoux" and "I Love You Dearly," that he had made when he was in his twenties. The great tenor Jean-Paul Fouchécourt, direct from Paris, sang the Satie songs to which "Bijoux" is set. Marisena Teicu Zamfir, direct from Bucharest, and with a flower in her hair, sang the Romanian folk songs for "I Love You Dearly." The Morris company is not rich; no American dance troupe is. "Jesu, Meine Freude," a 1993 ensemble piece, to Bach, is still being performed in the nylon nighties that the company's executive director, Nancy Umanoff, bought off the rack at Filene's two weeks before the premiere. Meanwhile, the musicians and singers who accompanied "Jesu" this season cost ten thousand dollars a night.

Morris's concern with music has resulted in some choreographic curiosities. All his work hews close to its music, but every now and then he creates a piece so faithful to its score, and so devoid of any other reference, as to deserve the term "music visualization." The score in question is usually an old, structurally tight

composition—often Baroque, often by Bach, whom Morris more or less worships. In the nineteen-eighties, when Morris was a controversial figure, a number of critics complained about these pieces, saying that he was just Mickey-Mousing the music. (In early Disney cartoons, Mickey would sometimes dance atop a line of music notation, and he would stop and start, go high and go low, when the notes did.) To this, Morris replied that music can never design steps: "People forget that somebody actually choreographed what Mickey Mouse does." Likewise, he had choreographed his dance, and if reviewers thought it bore some resemblance to Bach he thanked them for the compliment.

At times, the critics had a point. In some of Morris's music-visualization pieces, particularly the ones he made not for his own troupe but for ballet companies, the music does seem to take the place of meaning. The score develops a motif; Morris develops a motif. The score restates the theme; Morris restates the theme, and though the result looks very nice, we wonder what the hell he is trying to tell us. There seems to be a sort of wall between us and him. In other such pieces, though, the wall gradually vanishes, and we feel a rush of understanding, the more dazzling for its having been delayed. "V," this season's big new work, set to Schumann's Quintet in E-Flat, is a case in point.

The program notes say that "V" is dedicated to the city of New York, but that tribute, with its V-for-victory implication, was added only recently. When the dance was made (and named), last summer—and when it had its premiere, in London, in October—it bore no such insignia. Probably, the title just refers to the V pattern with which Morris begins and ends, and which he plays with in the middle. "V" has no characters, no story. As it opens, seven dancers charge forward in

a V formation. They look like a flight of condors, or the R.A.F. invading something, and their ice-blue costumes (by Martin Pakledinaz), so pretty and cold, reinforce the sense of power. This can't get more confident, you think. Then it does. The seven dancers exit, and a new group of seven, in different costumes, enters and performs the same steps, in a re-

is probably just music visualization again. In the score, at that moment, there are dotted low notes, so the movement is "dotted" (staccato) and low—indeed, on the floor. In the third and fourth movements, the company, again, does much of what Schumann does in his third and fourth movements. At the end, Morris re-collects the fourteen dancers into the

way. In those pieces, furthermore, he is doing what, for a choreographer, is a very honest thing: seeing music in physical terms. (That is the form of his imagination; when he thinks, he thinks in bodies.) Finally, he has a sense of the body's natural pathos, how flesh and bone—the naked legs, the hardworking buttocks—automatically turn music into



Dancers rehearsing "V" at the Mark Morris Dance Center in Brooklyn. Photograph by Ruven Afanador.

verse V. Well, you say, *this* can't get more confident. Then the first group re-enters, Morris nestles the two V's into each other, and they lay out the themes all over again. Everything is assured, triumphal.

And then, in the second movement, it all changes, as is the way with second movements. The music slows, the forces are reduced—at first, only one couple remains—and the dancers begin crawling on all fours. Crawling on all fours? Something must be going on. But we're never told what. There is still no story—no love, no death. Actually, the crawling

signature V and in each of seven couples reiterates one of the motifs he has been cycling throughout the piece. It is all clear, mathematical, Q.E.D. So why, early in the dance, as two dancers did little zigzags down the stage, did I feel as though I were going to burst into tears?

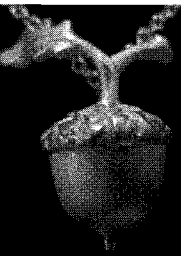
As far as I can tell, Morris's effort, in his music-visualization pieces, simply to reflect the score is not an evasion of emotion; it is an act of deference to the emotion contained in the music. He knows you'll be listening to it, as he did, and he almost doesn't want to get in the

human truth. "I love to see their butts," he once said of his company. Dance comes from the pelvis, and so he is fond of that part of the body. This is why, in the second movement of "V," the slow, tender, here-is-my-soul movement, the dancers crawl: so we can see their buttocks. That's where their souls are.

One soul is featured. Julie Worden is the company's movie star—tall, blond, leggy, beautiful. If I had a nickel for every time that a heterosexual male came up to me after a Mark Morris concert and said, "The blonde, with the legs, what's her

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name?," I'd be a rich person. Worden is a superb dancer, with a special manner—straightforward, unadorned—and Morris makes use of that in "V." She is the main soloist of the slow movement. Therefore she is the first one to crawl, and because of her objectivity, and also because she has what you might call a "swimmer's butt" (small, no-nonsense), she prevents us from attaching narrative meaning to that seemingly narrative action. She is also, again in the second movement, the first person to perform a very difficult, maybe ten-step partnering combination—bends, jumps, turns, the works—that will later be reiterated many times (it matches a theme in the music) by the other dancers. So she introduces a lot of toil and sorrow. But she herself toils not, neither does she spin, and so she keeps the argument abstract. When she crawls across the stage, you think, "How interesting," as opposed to, "Damn! I forgot to call my mother." Then the other dancers come on, with their toil, and acting skills, and body fat, and you remember your life.

This dialectic exemplifies Morris's sense of the relation between music and dance. He states his theme. It is pure and clean, like music. Then he develops the theme, makes it human, complicated, fleshy. This is not a new idea. On the contrary, it's the very old one, developed by Pythagoras and handed down since then, that nature and music and mathematics are all part of a single system, cold and clear at one end (the music of the spheres), warm and opaque at the other (us). That's the message of the music-visualization dances, and if, sometimes, it doesn't come across, that's because it's a philosophical concept. But when it does get across, the experience is uniquely exalted.

The message was more obvious fifteen years ago, when Morris had less "technical" dancers. You watched them struggle with the steps (Morris's choreography is very exacting), and your heart went out to them. The distance between them and Bach was clear. Today, Morris's dancers are expert. A ten-task combination? At top speed? No problem. Some old fans of the company rue this change. They find the work less touching. Also, Morris seems, consistently, to discourage the dancers from doing any acting whatsoever. As with the music visualizing, he wants to make us work. Or, rather,

he wants *everything* to be in the dancing, nothing in the manner.

Nevertheless, there are people in the company who, no matter how skilled, still push their steps to the breaking point, so that we end up in their hands, undergoing a rather big experience with them. This season, Marjorie Folkman made her New York debut in the climactic solo of Morris's "I Don't Want to Love." When it had its premiere, in 1996, this dance, with modern-looking people making histrionic gestures—fist-shaking, brow-grabbing—to the tune of Monteverdi love-laments, seemed to me a little coy, a little camp. No more. In what is now Folkman's solo, she *really* doesn't want to love. This story is all in the dancing, but dear God, what dancing! (She ends in a frontal backbend so huge, so stretched, that we can't see her head anymore. Love has decapitated her.) Another person currently heating up Morris's stage is the young David Leventhal. In ensemble works, you scan the group and—*boing!*—you see Leventhal, in a kind of trance of dancing, all concentration, all eagerness and detail.

At the same time, the troupe's performing wing now seems to be losing the person who was once its paragon, Mark Morris. In the past, the company rarely put on a repertory evening in which Morris did not dance at least once. This season, he appeared in only half the shows. Furthermore, in the one piece where we saw him, the newly created "Foursome," he and the other three men didn't do much of anything. Satie's famous "Gnossiennes" flowed past, and the men shook their wrists. The music swept by again, and the men turned ninety degrees. This was sort of witty and sort of boring. If I can read between the lines, such minimalism may be a sign that Morris is saying goodbye to the stage, or starting to. He is forty-five now, and he likes his dinner. He can't move the way he used to, and why should he? But he choreographs even better than he used to. Farewell, and hail. ♦

BLOCK THAT METAPHOR!
From the Times.

"We're not unconcerned," said Mary Matalin, Vice President Dick Cheney's chief political aide. "We're not so inflexible or blind that we're like Stepford wives and husbands marching like lemmings over a cliff. What we're doing now is recalibrating."

THE THEATRE

NIGHT FOR DAY

Arthur Miller's "The Crucible" on Broadway.

BY JOHN LAHR



Laura Linney and Liam Neeson as Elizabeth and John Proctor.

A great play allows itself to be seen through many lenses. Arthur Miller's "The Crucible," which celebrates its fiftieth anniversary next January and which is being given a masterly revival by Richard Eyre, at the Virginia Theatre, can be enjoyed as merely a terrific melodramatic yarn. His reimagining of the Salem witch hunt of 1692, in which nineteen people and two dogs were hanged for being in league with the Devil, cleverly combines love interest and courtroom drama. But in dramatizing the community's "rapture of murderous credulity"—Miller's term for the public paranoia—it also provides a cunning allegory for the blacklisting delirium of the House Un-American Activities Committee and for the breakdown of public discourse which engulfed

Miller and thousands of other left-wing sympathizers, and changed forever both the republic's notion of and expression of dissent. "I don't think I can adequately communicate the sheer density of the atmosphere of the time," Miller writes in his collected essays, "Echoes Down the Corridor." "For the outrageous had so suddenly become the accepted norm."

The play, which is Miller's most produced work, remains one of the only theatrical remnants of those craven years. On this historical level alone, "The Crucible" is an act of extraordinary moral courage: it honors the most profound function of theatre, which is to disenchant the citizen from the spell of received opinion. But, in analyzing how hysteria plays out both in the individual



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and in society, "The Crucible" goes beyond polemic to something more universal and profound, and it speaks eerily even to our own terrorized moment. In Abigail Williams (the edgy, excellent Angela Bettis), an orphaned seventeen-year-old Puritan who has been seen dancing in the woods trying to cast a spell over the wife of her thirty-five-year-old lover and former employer, John Proctor, Miller demonstrates the hysteric turning herself into an event in order to preserve a sense of goodness—"My name is good in the village! I will not have it said my name is soiled!" she says—and to project her dark, violent, repressed feelings onto others. (In actuality, Proctor was sixty and Abigail eleven.) She becomes the psychological paradigm of the community. Sanctioned by the Old Testament ("Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live") and by the Salem court's admission of "spectral evidence," in which suspected citizens could be condemned as witches on the hearsay of "cleansed" citizens—the first, demented version of Neighborhood Watch—Abigail splits off her vindictive turmoil into an eye-rolling, fainting, mad spectacle of her own hauntedness with which she proceeds to haunt others. These sensational theatrics, which both excite and paralyze her, are also intended to paralyze the world around her—a kind of violent return to some omnipotent childish innocence. A similar malignant tyranny is played out in the group, where no doubt and no questions can be tolerated. "Leaping to conclusions is a wonderful pleasure," Miller writes, "and for a while there was a highly charged joy in Salem, for now that they could see through everything to the frightful plot being daily laid bare in court sessions, their days, formerly so eventless and long, were swallowed up in hourly revelations, news, surprises." What "The Crucible" brilliantly dramatizes is the public acting out of the unconscious—"the fog of the unspoken," Miller calls it—which psychologists refer to as "negative hallucination," where the individual cannot see what is literally right in front of him.

Murkiness—the crepuscular gloom of Paul Gallo's lighting—is this production's dominating atmosphere. Shards of light slant through the rough-hewn slabs of wood in Tim Hatley's brooding behemoth set, which contracts to convey the shadowy claustrophobia of Puritan

habitation and expands to suggest the monumentality of the stockade. The set's size is itself a correlative of the enormous terror perceived to lurk just outside Salem—a virgin wilderness that to the Puritan imagination, as Miller says in the play's introduction, was "the Devil's last preserve, his home base and the citadel of his final stand," and where marauding Indians threatened the settlers with constant terror and made unity crucial to survival. The thematic hubbub of the play's first ten minutes, which document the precariousness of the settlers' lives, creates a somewhat smudged opening stage picture that becomes clear when Liam Neeson makes his entrance as John Proctor.

Neeson, who is Irish and stands six feet four, is a force of nature. He gives off a palpable charge. The stage directions call for a man "powerful of body, even-tempered, and not easily led." Neeson feels absolutely rooted in the play's imaginative soil—a potent amalgam of sinew and sensitivity. When Proctor learns that Abigail has accused his wife of witchcraft, he declares, "I will fall like an ocean on the court." The enormity of his passion and his wallop is never in doubt. Several years ago, I referred to Neeson as "a kind of sequoia of sex"; here the epithet is even more apt. No wonder the smitten, diminutive Abigail stands underneath the canopy of his muscular body and looks up at him in the excited way a squirrel looks at a tree. "Give me a word, John," Abigail says. "A soft word." Proctor, who has come to break things off with her for good, has few soft words for her, or for the Reverend Parris, with whose preaching of "hellfire and bloody damnation" he has no truck. The plot neatly establishes both his emotional honesty and his intellectual independence.

Proctor, who is forced to recite the Commandments, is a great believer in some of them. By making his hero a sinner, a man struggling to live by the faith he embraces, Miller shrewdly establishes the foundation of a tragic trajectory. When we encounter Proctor with the scrubbed, taciturn Elizabeth Proctor (the expert Laura Linney), their tentative badinage dramatizes his struggle to repair his betrayed wife's shaky trust in him. "I have gone tiptoe in this house all seven months since she is gone," he says, speaking of Abigail, who has publicly rejected

the Devil and is reported to be basking in the power of newfound righteousness. He goes on, "And still an everlasting funeral marches round your heart. . . . Let you look sometimes for the goodness in me . . . and judge me not." Judgment, however, is in the air.

"Now no one is safe" was a frequently repeated phrase in letters between Salem citizens, Miller says in his autobiography, "Timebends." The play not only conjures their panic and impotence at such confounding claims—"the breaking of charity" between members of the community whose vested interests were hidden behind vituperative spiritual charges—but the charade of confession and ritual cleansing on which life and death hung. As the chief interrogator, Deputy Governor Danforth, Brian Murray, with his orotund articulation and his smug self-possession, compounds the injustice of the superbly managed courtroom proceedings, where the power of suggestion is shown weaving its mad, ruinous, legalistic delusion—what Miller calls "the pall of suspicion." In the courtroom, Proctor himself becomes a victim of the hysteric's uncanny ability to get inside the psyche: he brings his servant Mary Warren—a friend of Abigail's—to clear his wife's name, only to find, as Abigail's projections take possession of the girl, that his own name is blackened as "the Devil's man."

At the finale, Elizabeth Proctor's pregnancy saves her from death; John Proctor's honesty saves him from dishonor. He refuses to take part in the sham. Boxing clever, Proctor insists that he will "not spoil" the names of others; nor will he sign his name to a bogus confession. In choosing death, Proctor claims his goodness. The pragmatic Deputy Governor stares at Proctor—an apparent turkey voting himself an early Christmas—and asks why. "Because it is my name," Proctor says, famously. He adds, "Because I cannot have another in my life. . . . How may I live without my name? I have given you my soul; leave me my name." Three years after writing "The Crucible," when Miller was courting Marilyn Monroe, he was called before the HUAC interrogators. Even here the play's demonstration of corrupt cleansing proved prescient. The committee chairman sent word via Miller's lawyer, as he writes in "Echoes Down the Corridor," "that he would be inclined

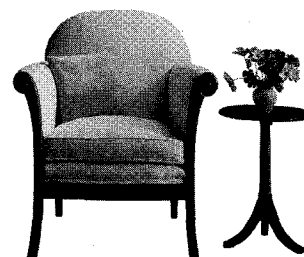
to cancel my hearing altogether if Miss Monroe would consent to have a picture taken with him."

Man's need to make order out of chaos is given an altogether happier poetic spin in Ovid's "Metamorphoses," loosely adapted and directed by Mary Zimmerman, who has had the ingenious idea of staging the caprice of the gods—they are miked for full God-iosity—in a swimming pool. Water is life; it calls up associations with the unconscious, the primordial ooze, birth, and sex. Here in the raked seats of the Circle in the Square, we stare down at a swimming pool bordered by a pine deck and filled with calming ink-blue water, with scudding clouds reflected on its glassy surface from a suspended upstage canvas of painted sky. The elegant, surreal playfulness of the stage picture broadcasts the tone of Zimmerman's deft direction and her vernacular reinventions. It's fun and full of wonder. At one point, the petulant Phaeton lolls on a raft talking to his therapist, who sits poolside listening to him whine about his father, the Sun, who promised to do him a favor. "Now, there's only one thing I want—I mean, it's obvious, right? I say, 'Give me the keys to your car.' Immediately he starts backpeddling," Phaeton moans. He goes on, "I want to drive it myself across the sky. It's my turn. You promised. I want to light the world today." Later, the Therapist says, "It's important and salutary to speak not only of the rational and the easily understood but also of incomprehensible things."

Zimmerman's charming cartoons illustrate rather than dramatize psychic struggle. For instance, King Ceyx tosses away happiness with Queen Alcyon only to be lethally tempest-tossed by Poseidon; Myrrha sleeps with her blindfolded father Cinyras; the gods honor the enduring love of Philemon and Baucis, who are transformed before our eyes into a tree. As staged, although delightful to look at, these tales are to the myths what Big Macs are to meat. At a mere ninety minutes, "Metamorphoses," which has at least two endings, is too long. Because of her scenic prowess, Zimmerman pulls the show off without getting it quite right. The swimming pool, which is the show's gimmick, turns out to be its metaphor—refreshing and shallow. ♦

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THE CURRENT CINEMA

SEX MEX

"Y Tu Mamá También."

BY ANTHONY LANE

The new movie from the Mexican director Alfonso Cuarón, "Y Tu Mamá También," begins with sex and ends in death. In short, all human life is here. The circumstances of the death I will not reveal; the sex, however, is about as revealing as one could wish for in these unsultry days of March. The extravagantly willing participants in the opening scene are Tenoch Iturbide (Diego Luna) and his girlfriend; this is a valedictory coupling before the girl goes on vacation, and Tenoch is keen to establish a rubric of fidelity. "Promise me you won't fuck any Italians," he implores. This is the first sentence of the movie, and it sets in train a surge of difficult thoughts: what do we long for, to whom do we belong, and how long can the longing last?

Tenoch has wealthy parents flowing with social connections, and a maid to bring him sandwiches whenever he asks; his best friend, Julio Zapata (Gael García Bernal), comes from a lowly background and lives in a cramped apartment. (The contrast is deliberately loaded: Iturbide is the family name of a Mexican emperor, and we all know what role Zapatas were born to play.) The friends are both seventeen, and the remit of the movie is to track their stumbling passage from horny boys to half-made men. The story brims with events that require our heroes to mature; on the other hand, when you watch them stretched out on adjacent diving boards, above the blue desolation of a pool, beating off to their own, choric recitation of women they desire—the point of no return being a yell of "Salma Hayek!"—they seem like little more than happy sacks of hormones, and Ms. Hayek should be flattered to get the nod.

It is the progress of these would-be rakes that lends the film its halting, Godardian rhythm: every now and then, the sound blots out completely, and a voice-over cuts into the action like a sharp squeeze of lemon—putting the friends in their place, or predicting futures. (After a sequence involving a herd of pigs, we hear, "Over the next two months, fourteen would be slaughtered." What about the rest of us? Do pearls get a better deal than swine?) Just when you think the plot is drifting into the inconsequential, Julio and Tenoch go to a fancy wedding reception, attended by the Mexican President. There, in ill-fitting finery, the pals run into a vision: Luisa Cortés (Maribel Verdú), who is maybe twice their age—sheathed in white, like a descending angel, and thus way beyond the devilish reach of the boys. Yet, in her sly humoring of their anti-cool, of their callow attempts to flirt, there is a whisper of something not wholly unreachable; Luisa, who has recently arrived from Madrid, is married to Tenoch's handsome creep of a cousin, and she is bored. She asks for tips on what to see, and, in the glandular panic that grips all unworldly kids when faced with a woman of the world, Julio and Tenoch recommend a perfect beach, Heaven's Mouth. They make up the name on the spot, and even offer—as a joke, as a dare—to take her there. Hey, it's not as if she would ever say yes. Then, a few days later, she says yes.

From here on, "Y Tu Mamá También"—literally, "And Your Mother Too"—shows just how alarming it can be to have your wish come true. The boys pick up Luisa in a borrowed car and set off through the landscape of modern Mexico: patchy, luscious, never

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wholly untroubled. In the course of their travels, they do indeed happen upon a perfect beach and grab a day or two of bliss, and Luisa really does make out with both Julio and Tenoch—separately at first, and then all together in a happy, drunken slur of lust from which there is no escape, and no recovery. All the ecstasies in the movie carry within them the seed of disappointment, and what flowers from the openness, lyrical and sexual, of this short-lived idyll is a revelation of troubled times. When the friends skulk around to Luisa's window at a motel and peek inside, hoping to catch her in the nude, they find her coiled up in tears; and, as their car bowls cheerfully along a dusty road, the camera glances to one side and sees a bunch of policemen harassing a suspect. What the man has done, and whether he deserves a slap from the law, is not the point; what matters is that the director, like all epicureans, is also a melancholic, and that, in having his characters drain the cup of life, he doesn't simply want to get them drunk. He wants the dregs, and the hangover, and the faintest trace of poison. And that goes for Mexico, too; Cuarón's view of his own nation, of the shifting backdrop behind his principal figures, is lit with both homage and rant. The politics of the picture are never as explicit as the sex, thank heaven, although each feels the heat of the other, and you wind up needing to ask, Can a country grow too fast, like a kid with unbearable wants?

To American audiences, at least, nothing in Cuarón's previous work has prepared us for such grave sensuality. After "A Little Princess" and "Great Expectations," the new movie feels almost like a self-rebuke. It is as if he had shaken himself like a dog, slipped the leash of Hollywood, and made the incredible journey back home. The film is not just suffused with his native land, it is resuffused, as if Cuarón could hardly handle the onslaught of physical impressions that rained down upon him. I wonder, too, whether "Y Tu Mamá También" was spurred into action by "Amores Perros," the chaotically strong Mexican film of last year, which left us with the sight, and the carnal reek, of a society into which any filmmaker should be proud to sink his teeth. The two movies boast the same young actor, Gael

García Bernal, whose moist and slender eyes miss nothing, and who can skip from bullish to frail within a single scene; he and his co-star, Diego Luna, have known each other in real life since they were kids, and that companionship lends an oiled ease to their hanging out, and to the filthy patter of their private jokes. How they felt about kissing each other,

scene is all farce and fumble. Both boys come in seconds; that is what boys do, for all the brio of their boasting—almost what boys are *for*. When Cuarón made "Great Expectations," he had to film the disrobing of Gwyneth Paltrow as a session of peekaboo—you see her, you see her not. When Maribel Verdú sits naked on the beach, it's no big deal;



Diego Luna, Maribel Verdú, and Gael García Bernal in a new Mexican road movie.

or about the lovely Maribel Verdú—at once loosely comic and contained, a wet dream with a dry wit—sliding to her knees before them both, with a hand on each belt buckle, are topics best left to the imagination of the audience, who will leave the theatre with thirsts of their own to quench. Talk about Heaven's Mouth.

"Y Tu Mamá También" is being released unrated in this country, like all movies that are foolish enough to show sex onscreen. By sex, I mean the act in its galumphing glory. I do not mean hard-core sex—staffed by unsmiling stallions, pile driving their way through a grim agenda of release—or soft-core sex, with its moans dusted on like blusher and its sheets pulled like curtains across the bust. The problem with hard-core and soft-core is precisely that they are cores; they have none of the cladding, none of the rumpled human activity in which sex comes naturally wrapped. That is why lovemakers on camera, hard or soft, invariably and boringly succeed in bed; whereas, when Luisa pulls Tenoch toward her in the motel, or briskly deprives Julio of his jeans in the back of a car, the

like her two companions nearby, we can look, or we can look away. We can take it.

Last year, when "Y Tu Mamá También" came out in Mexico—where it became the highest-grossing homegrown picture ever—filmgoers under eighteen were forbidden to see it. They picketed the cinemas, and the ban was lifted: a smart move, because there is plenty to inflame in this picture and nothing to corrupt. If anything, the Julios and the Tenochs in the theatre will be left sadder and wiser than before; the friends' hold on paradise is no sooner found than lost, and their final scene together knocks you sideways, even though it involves no more than a quiet talk in a café. Only the surest talents can deliver this offhand profundity; maybe Cuarón was thinking of "Sentimental Education," in which Flaubert's twin heroes, likewise, sign off with a touch so light it makes you cry. Julio and Tenoch may spill over with sauce and silliness, but that is the privilege of the young; and it is the job of the adult artist to dig back into that time, and to unearth, from the ridiculous, the shards of a broken sublime. ♦

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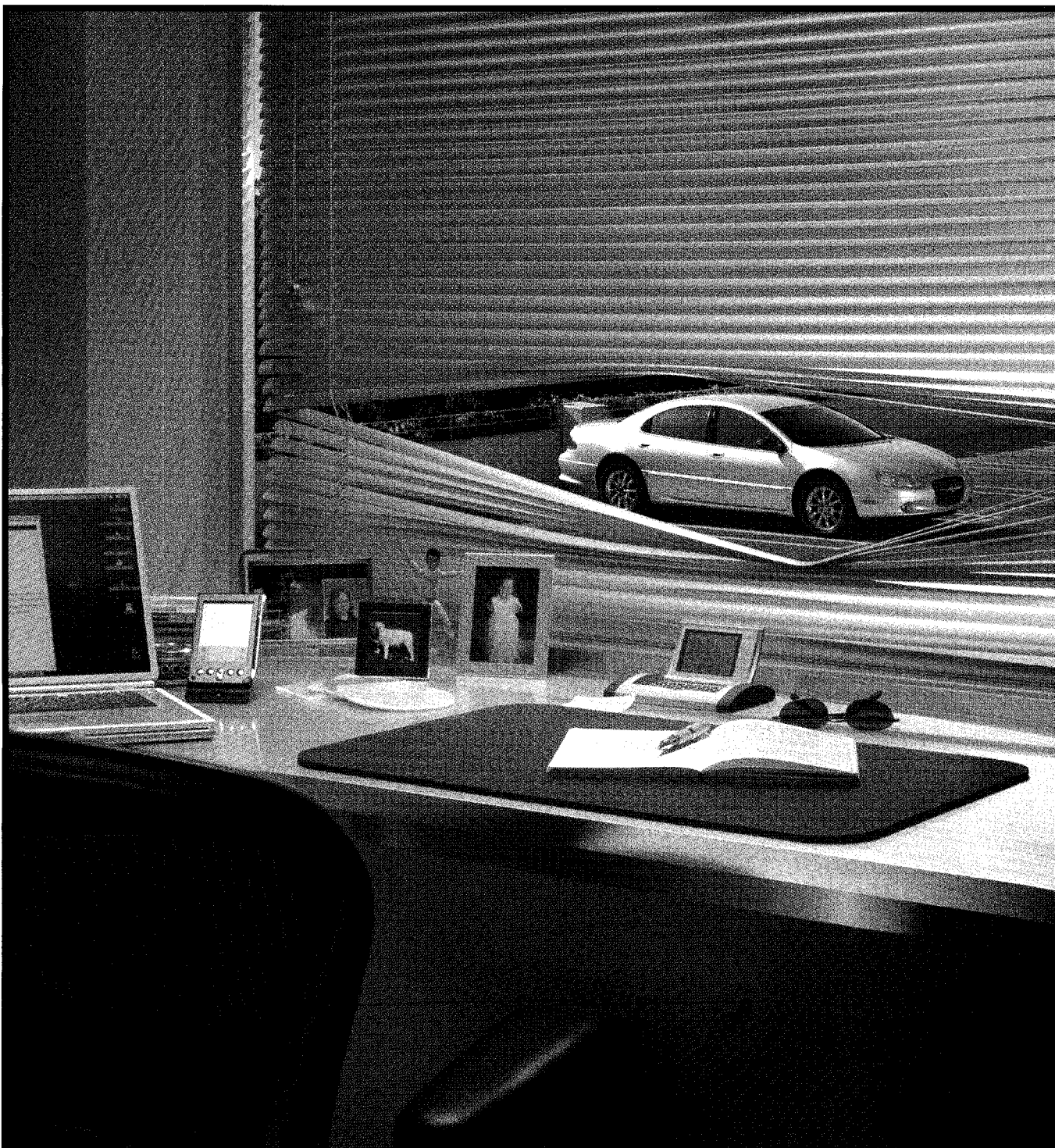
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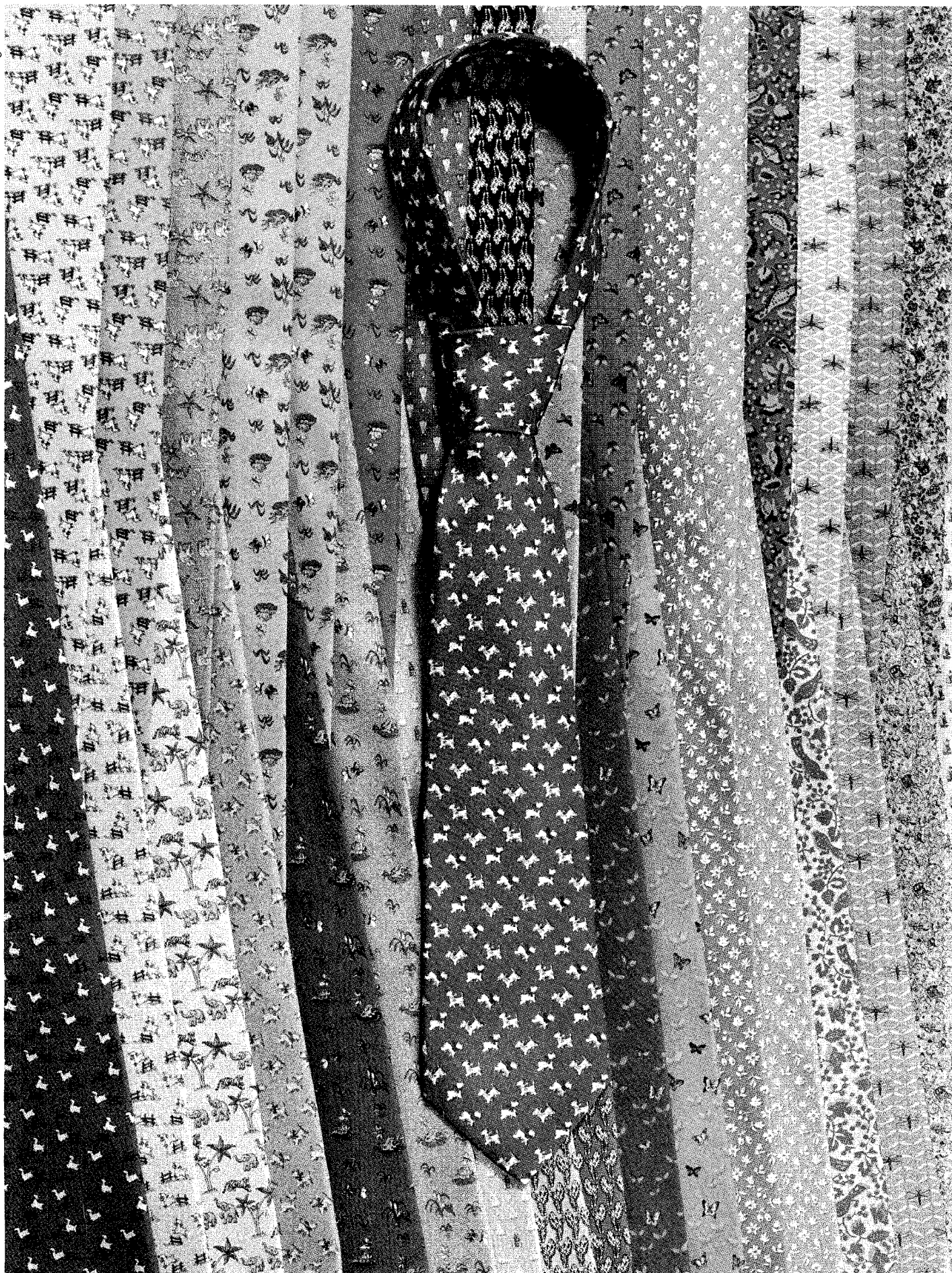
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